



# INDIAN DREAM LANDS

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. TOWARDS THE SUN . . . . .	1
II. THE ARABIAN SEA . . . . .	11
III. COLOMBO . . . . .	17
IV. TROPICAL SUN-SHINE AND RAIN . . . . .	27
V. THE GATE OF INDIA . . . . .	37
VI. CAVES OF THE PAST AND TOWERS OF THE FUTURE . . . . .	52
VII. THE SACRED MOUNTAIN . . . . .	64
VIII. "LA VILLE ROUE" . . . . .	76
IX. THE PALACE OF AMBIL . . . . .	84
X. THE INDIAN WOMAN . . . . .	93
XI. HINDU MARRIAGE . . . . .	106
XII. THE MOSLEM CONQUERORS OF INDIA . . . . .	120
XIII. THE GREAT MOGHULS . . . . .	133
XIV. IMPERIAL ROMANCE . . . . .	149
XV. SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI . . . . .	162
XVI. THE RED FORTRESS OF AKBAR . . . . .	169
XVII. OLD DELHI . . . . .	182
XVIII. KUTUB OF THE PATHANS . . . . .	188
XIX. TAJ BIBI KA ROZA . . . . .	198
XX. THE GLORY OF AGRA . . . . .	209



# CONTENTS

	PAGE
XXI. THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS . . . . .	226
XXII. THE ENGLISH IN INDIA . . . . .	241
XXIII. RELIGION IN INDIA . . . . .	258
XXIV. THE MISSIONARIES . . . . .	276
XXV. BENARES . . . . .	288
XXVI. CALCUTTA . . . . .	297
XXVII. STATION LIFE . . . . .	304
XXVIII. "ON THE ROAD TO MANDALAY" . . . . .	316
XXIX. AMONG THE LOTUS FLOWERS . . . . .	325
XXX. THE RIVER OF DELIGHT . . . . .	338
XXXI. "ULTIMA THULE" . . . . .	346
XXXII. ON THE FAR REACHES OF THE RIVER . . . . .	351
XXXIII. RANGOON . . . . .	359
XXXIV. THE GREAT TEMPLES OF SOUTHERN INDIA . . . . .	369
XXXV. THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SPOT IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE . . . . .	387

# INDIAN DREAM LANDS



## TOWARDS THE SUN.

**B**EFORE the discovery of the North Pole, I had always believed that the failure of the expeditions was due to the fact that the explorers were generally recruited among those unable to support the cold.

Swedes and Norwegians, who predominated in the crews, are accustomed to sit in rooms with double windows and heated by porcelain stoves, while Americans are dependent on steam heat. The English, indeed, from their habit of sitting in glacial rooms, often colder than the outside air, had a much better chance. But, had the expeditions been composed only of persons inured to the winters on the Riviera, the Pole might have been conquered long ago.

The storks and swallows have set us the example of flying south in winter, and the heart of man turns naturally towards the sun when the shadows of autumn are creeping across the world. But how and where?

Italy was once the land of winter flight. Perhaps, however, the world was warmer then than now. Then Egypt and Algiers had their turn, but now alas! even the North of Africa is treacherous and

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

cold. Where then shall those go who long for heat and light?

To the tropics, for there indeed are the only true "Lands of the Sun!" But where, since the tropics are wide as the world?

Anywhere, for the charm of the present, for sunlight and verdure and flowers. But if we would add to all this, the glory of architecture and the enchantment of the past, we must seek them in the Indies alone! In India and farther India.

Many will think these Golden Lands too far away. But just for the reason that they are so far from the banal and levelling influences of the Occident they have retained their mystery and their charm.

When Warren Hastings went to India it took him four months from England. Now the voyage can be made in from three to four weeks. But one should not start from England, but from some port in the Mediterranean. The endless, dreary, Liverpool or Southampton docks are not the pedestal on which to raise the memories of a journey so wonderful. The impressions of India should begin and end with sunlight, so that the picture may remain for ever in the mind, glowing with life, light and colour!

We sailed from Genoa on a glowing October day, when the whole life of Italy had expanded like a sunflower in the sun.

I had often thought that there was no more beautiful harbour than that of Genoa. A harbour like an amphitheatre with the mountains curving round it, its palaces and towers and yellow and rose-coloured houses rising terrace above terrace, a splendid circle of rich colour. Its "ships of all

nations" riding its blue glittering waters, and between its twin light towers the narrow way which opens on the sea. A perfect scene for a romantic Opera and also just the frontispiece for the book I had so long hoped and longed to read, the book of India!

Outside, the Mediterranean awaited us in its gentlest and most beautiful mood. And for four days we sailed over a smiling, sparkling, sunlit, sapphire sea. The air was that of summer and we were in the second quarter of the moon, so that it may be truly said that the days were blue and gold, and the evenings blue and silver. On the night of the fourteenth-fifteenth we approached the African Coast and in the morning we awoke to find ourselves in Port Said.

Being well acquainted with the near Orient, I could not have believed that it contained a place so uninteresting as Port Said. One must remember, however, that it is not Oriental except through a part of its population, having been built for the accommodation of the French engineers, and as an entrance to the Canal. In its earlier years it was considered a very dangerous place, being largely composed of gambling houses and various dens of vice. But now it has become quiet and respectable. The Palais du Canal rears its yellow and red façades along the water, surrounded by wooden houses with verandas. And the whole ensemble recalls a New-Jersey seaside resort on a hot day. And yet, disappointing, as it was, to me it was endowed with a strange and unique charm. To me it was the gate to a new world through which I was about to pass from the known to the unknown.

My husband went on shore and brought me back a silver veil (which I had always wanted), and at

noon we weighed our anchors and steamed into the Canal.

The Suez Canal! How strange, weird and wonderful it is. A narrow ribbon of gleaming water, stretching across a flat and endless desert of grey sand. For a long distance a lagoon extended the right bank, which sage bushes and rough grass fringed with a greyish green. But on the left hand all was desert, and through this desert (a strange feeling indeed) we were gliding in a ship. All else was as it had been for innumerable centuries, and all else seemed to ignore us, and the anachronism of the canal! Sometimes we saw a troop of Arabs wrapped in their bournouses riding along on camels or on donkeys, just as they had done in Mohammed's time and long before. They did not even turn to look at us. It was as if we were invisible and taking this strange look into a forbidden world, ourselves unseen.

As twilight fell, the scene changed to a vision of enchantment, for Heaven had favoured us with the full moon. We passed a village embowered in palm trees and then a P. & O. steamer, brilliant with electric lights, while slowly, slowly, all the desert turned to gleaming silver. The sky softened and grew richer till it attained a perfect turquoise, and we were in a shining blue and silver world.

Before midnight we were in the Bitter Lakes. The moon was then in the zenith, stars sparkling around her here and there like jewels sprinkled on blue velvet. The water also was of the softest blue and veiled by the faint mist—a blue world now, with only a silver rim. Here and there lighted ships flew about like fire-flies, leaving behind them trails

of fire, upon the water. It was a scene almost impossible to tear one's self away from and never to be forgotten.

The next morning we were in the Gulf of Suez, and we felt that the gates of the western world had closed behind us. On either side were mountains of red sandstone, Egypt on the right, Arabia on the left. A deep blue sky that seemed to pulse with light and colour arched grandly over us. Its sapphire colour was reflected in the sea. And yet . . . yes it was true . . . in every wave there flickered a red shadow.

The gulf was alive with boats, steamers modern and uninteresting, and Arabian and African ships built of unpainted wood with red-brown sails. Doubtless such as those which had brought Abraham and his army from Abyssinia, in the dawn of Arabian history.

Sixty-five passengers had landed at Port Said. The ship was therefore much more roomy and comfortable and those who were left on board became better acquainted. We had a pleasant company, mostly English, Australians and New Zealanders, half a dozen Americans and the same number of Singalese. The latter were rich landowners, fine-looking men, but darker than any whom I saw afterwards in Ceylon, indeed they were almost black.

I had come on board at Genoa in summer attire to find all the English women in cloth coats and skirts and Tam-o'-shanters. (Hideous costume which only the English climate can excuse.) Some however had softened the severity of their appearance a little since then, and now by mutual consent they all came out in muslins and lawns, and hats were generally



discarded. The change was very pleasing and the ship in consequence wore a much gayer air. There was a slight difficulty caused by the fact that most of the men assumed white linen suits which made it difficult to distinguish them from the stewards.

I have sailed in many seas, but never before in one which I found so comfortable and so interesting as the Red Sea. I put the comfort first, because when we are comfortable we are in a much truer position to observe and to enjoy. In my many crossings of the cold, dull Atlantic and in winter voyages in the Mediterranean, my principal impressions have been of climbing rolling staircases, weighed down with heavy wraps and sitting tucked in rugs for long grey hours in a deck-chair. I had always longed to sail in a tropical sea and now at last my dream was realized. No wraps, no rugs, no rolling staircases or rolling decks. Not even any tiresome people taking constitutionals and stopping to say how many times they had been round the ship.

All restless spirits seemed now becalmed, and satisfied to lounge in steamer-chairs and drink lemonade, and I, who hate all heavy clothes and think that cloth was never made for women, revelled in muslin and wore slippers on my feet and nothing on my head.

We had a large delightful state-room on the promenade deck. Our chairs were placed just outside, so that I could reach for books or anything I wanted through the windows. Life involved no exertion of any kind and I was as happy and independent as a pile dweller in the middle of a lake.

I have sailed the Adriatic in summer, along the wild Dalmatian coast, and the Ægean Sea, among

the Isles of Greece in spring ! But even these transcendent seas have not the intense, mysterious charm of the Red Sea. A savage, almost sinister charm it has, and almost overpowering like a spell of enchantment. The red mountains blazing in the sunlight along its shores and its intense blue waters flecked, as it were with blood.

All day we sailed along the coast of the Peninsula of Sinai, one long range of mountains, and in the middle of the afternoon we reached its termination. Most of those on board had seen all this before, and yet they all stopped whatever they were doing to look with reverence on Mount Sinai. At the end of the Peninsula there are three mountains, one behind the other. The third and farthest from the sea is Sinai.

A hush fell upon us as we looked at this witness of our religion, this immutable reality. There was no other cloud in all the blue and yet, as if to veil its majesty, a cloud rested on its summit, even as then !

Mount Sinai is as much an object of veneration to the Moslem as to the Christian, indeed one might almost say more. There is a devout band in Arabia whose purpose it is to be buried, and if possible, to die on Mount Sinai. When these men feel death approaching, they make every effort to reach the sacred mountain and they are most happy if they succeed in meeting death on its slopes, while wrapped in prayer. If this is impossible, their bodies are carried to the mountain and buried among the sacred rocks and sands. Truly the thought of all these lonely desert graves is an impressive one, and an evidence of faith such as it would be hard to find in Christendom.

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

I gazed at Mount Sinai till we had turned the point of the peninsula; this Peninsula of Sinai, once rich in mines of emeralds and turquoises, rich still in stupendous recollections. The waves curled around the promontory and we were out in the open sea.

The passengers began a Bridge tournament at this juncture of the voyage, but although I like Bridge well enough, I would not play it then. Those days were too precious. Others, I think, regretted that they had not followed my example. Partners were then drawn for, and the originator of the scheme, a charming Irishman of the old school, Mr. McD., drew a lady who said she did not know the game, but felt sure she could master it, as she went along. Then other disappointments followed. However they were all soon playing furiously and I was left undisturbed in my contemplation of the sea.

The great charm of the Red Sea is its mystery. A charm which many miss because they pass through it, as through other highways of life, without ever thinking where they are. To-day it is the highway to India and the Far East, and for this reason it is traversed by the steamships of all nations. But these ships pass through it only, without stopping by the way, whilst for hundreds of miles on either hand, countries almost unknown slumber on, unconscious still of the world's commerce, diplomacy and pleasure-seeking which pass them by. Egypt, we know indeed, but that is soon left behind. But Nubia, Dongola, Sennaar, and Abyssinia are to most people only names. And Arabia, stretching along the length of the eastern shore suggests nothing to the majority of people but dim memories of the "Arabian Nights."

Had the Suez Canal never been made, this sea would not be brightened by a single European sail, or darkened by a single trail of smoke; cut off and forgotten it would lie in the sunlight in a dreamless sleep, behind its "Gate of Tears." Strange is it then, and hard to realize that once it was the centre of the world.

The Mediterranean was the centre in ancient and mediæval times down to the discovery of America. Since then and still to-day the Atlantic is the centre. To-morrow it will be the Pacific.

Yes, in ancient times the Mediterranean was the centre as far back as the beginning of European history. But in the still more ancient times which went before, when Europe was unknown, the drama of the world was acted around the Red Sea. We know but little of it, only slowly, slowly we are gathering up the threads. Sometimes it is the ruins of a city unearthed by chance on the African shore, sometimes an empty reservoir or broken dam in the Arabian Valleys, showing that the desert was once an irrigated and fruitful land. And thus from time to time a corner of the veil is lifted, permitting those who love and seek the secrets of the past to look, if only for a moment, into the mirror which reflects the morning of the world.

We kept our course along the Arabian coast. Always the same wild barren mountains, glowing red in the sunshine, but grey and silvery in the light of the moon. On the 19th we crossed the line of Cancer and, for the first time in my life, I was where I had always longed to be—in the tropics! There was no difference in the temperature, for that had been tropical ever since we reached Suez. But

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

there was the delightful feeling that in the point of weather we were having what others had not, as in Europe it was growing cold, and also we were getting more than our share.

I was born in the autumn, on the 14th of October, but I do not love this season of the year, no matter how beautiful it may be, it always makes me sad. Even as a child, I used to wish that when September came I could fly away to the Southern hemisphere and begin the year again with the return of spring. This year, for the first and only time, I was able to have an autumn after my own heart's desire. My birthday had been our last day in the Mediterranean, and when we entered the canal "for that new world which is the old," I felt that I had left all other years behind me and entered on *an all new year*! In Europe the days were growing shorter and darker and colder, as the sun receded. Winter was coming with its bitter winds and ice and snow. But we (and the thought filled my heart with joy) were leaving all that behind and every day drawing nearer the sun.

The next day we threaded our way among splendid rocky islands on one of which was a Turkish lighthouse. Late in the afternoon we saw the town of Mocha, a cluster of square white houses relieved by a few minarets. In the night we passed through the Straits of Bab el Mandeb, and so to my great regret I missed seeing that ill-starred "Gate of Tears."

THE  
ARABIAN SEA

MANY people who visit the Orient know little or nothing about it beforehand, and not understanding what they see, and judging everything by Occidental standards they receive an entirely false impression. In the majority of cases this does not much matter, as these travellers are content to see and do not seek to understand. But the unfortunate part of it is that some of them write books about it afterwards, and so circulate ideas and impressions which, to say the least are mistakes. To the Occidental mind the Orient is strange, illusive and mysterious. One cannot be surprised that many go through it as a child goes through a picture-book, looking at the pictures, but not trying to read the book.

I have been an Oriental student all my life. Like most children I delighted in the "Arabian Nights," but unlike others, I did not as I grew older, cast them aside. Instead I sought to supplement them with Indian, Chinese and Japanese tales, from which I climbed to Oriental poetry and Oriental history. Then feeling, as one must who loves and seeks to understand the East, that the key to its life is to be found in its religions, I turned my mind to them.

Reversing the natural sequence, I climbed from the *Märchen* to the legend, from the legend to the myth, and as each religion unfolded itself to me I found the God in each! In all at least, except Buddhism, in which there is no God, and which, therefore, is not a religion, but only a philosophy. A vast study indeed and one by no means ended. But one in which I have found such intense pleasure that I long to share that pleasure with others, and to offer them (as I have done before), some of the flowers which I have culled, which many have neither time nor opportunity to gather for themselves.

On the morning of the 21st we found ourselves anchored at some little distance from Aden. The whole scene had changed. The mountains which towered behind the low white town were no longer red but a bluish-grey, and there was no more "blood" in the sea. The water itself was quite changed. No longer the intense sapphire of the Red Sea, but a light transparent blue like that of the Adriatic at Venice, which I have always felt sure inspired the blue colour of Venetian glass. All around us was a flotilla of small boats filled with Berbers and Soudanese, those sun-baked sons of the desert, many of them, with their hair dyed bright red. They were shouting and screaming, and offering their wares for sale, such as skins, horns, ostrich feathers, baskets, oranges and dates. There is always a temptation to buy from these people. They are so naive and irresistible. Most of them were young boys. But I knew them well of old at Assouan, where I had succumbed to their fascinations to the extent of buying many things I did not want. So

I contented myself with the purchase of a pair of fine antelope horns.

We were to stop several hours, so we availed ourselves of the opportunity of going ashore, as I had a great desire to set foot in Arabia. We were rowed in by five Berbers, in a prehistoric, heavy, unpainted wooden boat, and never have I had a more wonderful crossing. The sea glittered in the sunlight with a soft splendour. One could look down into its crystal depths and see shoals of little bright finned fishes, and every time the oars dipped and rose they threw into the air and back into the sea, what seemed like showers of gold and silver spangles. But when we reached the shore the enchantment ended. I had hoped and believed I would find an Arabian town, with narrow winding streets and over-hanging latticed windows. But alas! Aden belongs to England, and the Arab, too proud to live under the rule of the Giaour, has withdrawn from the town and left not even his footprint in the sand.

There is a square and also a few broad streets, lined with square whitewashed houses of one story, or as they would say on the Continent, no story at all. The whole front of those cabins opens with a rough folding door, and inside the Berber inhabitants are seen sitting on the ground. There is a dreary Levantine hotel, a few houses of Europeans and the English Club, which is the most attractive object in the place with its verandas facing the sea. A few miles inland there are reservoirs cut in the rocks which are believed to have been made by King Solomon. These reservoirs still supply the town with water, when there is water, but we were told



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

that at the moment they were dry, as it had not rained in Aden for seven years.

I should dearly have liked to see the work of Solomon, but our time was all too short. One cannot have everything, and after all life is like a cordial, one must drink it slowly, slowly. We may see the reservoirs of Solomon another time, and then they may be full of water.

We steamed away from Aden, still keeping near the shore, and just before sunset we turned the corner of Arabia, and this sight was the most splendid we have seen. Towering rocks, a wonderful blue-black in colour, rising straight from the sea, formed the final rampart of this mysterious peninsula—that country which almost as large as Europe, still lies impregnable behind her wall of mountains, bidding defiance to all conquerors, now as ever, and still almost unknown to the rest of the world. I gazed on this proud coast as if under a spell, as indeed I was, until the sun went down behind us in the water like a ball of fire, and we were out in the Arabian Sea!

In the tropics day and night are each twelve hours long, and there is neither twilight nor dawn. At five minutes to six in the morning it is dark. At six the sun shoots up like a rocket from the underworld, and night is changed into day. At five minutes to six in the evening it is resplendent afternoon and at six the sun suddenly disappears behind the mountains or into the sea. There is no sunset. But, after the west has grown dark, it miraculously flushes again with the after-glow. Sometimes the after-glow is short, sometimes it lingers, illuminating the west with an unearthly splendour, which softly and slowly fades into darkness. On that evening

the after-glow was very short, only the golden flush of a few moments and then we sailed directly into the night.

For the first hours there was no moon, but the stars shone with a brilliancy that I had never seen before. Indeed never before had I been so far south. The sea was ruffled by a breeze and every wave was edged with phosphorous, while balls of green fire (which no one could explain) floated in the water.

Every now and then a shooting star flashed across the sky and dropped into the sea. And at last the moon rose, a half circle of mellow gold, completing the enchantment of this "Arabian Night."

For five days we pursued our course through the Arabian Sea. Each day it grew hotter, but each day there was more wind. The monsoon was not yet over, although it was the end of October. We kept well out on the high sea, but to our disappointment, saw no islands. Here it was that Sindbad the Sailor made his immortal voyages, and here in the Arabian Sea lay the enchanted islands of the "Arabian Nights." Sindbad is no more, nor would I recall him, but the islands are still full of the enchantment of nature, I was destined later to see. The water had become a deeper blue, but was still transparent as Venetian glass. We could see shoals of fish swimming below us, and swarms of pretty little flying fish fluttered like white butterflies over the waves.

The Bridge tournament was over, and for two days we amused ourselves with a Gymkhana. I ran in the egg and spoon race myself, and tried, blindfolded, to chalk an eye in the pig, but carried off no prize.

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

On the 27th at two o'clock we sighted land, a low-lying red shore, plumed with green, which as we drew nearer resolved itself into a forest of palm trees on a beach of red sand. Ceylon!!!

### III

## COLOMBO

**C**EYLON is red. The soil is red, a warm Venetian red. The stems of the palms are red, shining like copper. And the stone of which most of the buildings in Colombo are built is of the same rich red. All else, for all else is vegetation, is a glorious bewildering green.

It had rained just before our arrival, for rain comes with the monsoon, and everything glowed with a dewy freshness, though so quickly does this soil absorb the water, the red quay and the streets were dry. We had entered the round, graceful harbour through the narrow pass in the red sea-wall, and gone ashore in a launch, creeping warily among the shipping of the East and West. At last I was able to set foot on shore, overjoyed to be there!

A crowd of Singalese, draped in white linen with their hair tucked up with combs, were on the quay awaiting us and among them a few Indians in bright colours. Beyond, a row of rickshaws were drawn up ready for use. And the perfumes of the tropics filled the air. Nothing seemed strange to me. On the contrary all was dear and familiar. I needed no guide to show me the way, for I felt like one coming home! Was it because I loved the Orient so much that I knew it by heart?

My first impression of the "Oriental Hotel" remains always in my mind. Long dim corridors where cocoanut matting deadened the tread, with rows of doors over which were high transoms filled with wooden slats. Everything was made of the natural wood, merely oiled, and still spicy with the odours of the tropical forests. And here, as outside, the air was laden with perfumes, the sweet penetrating scents of cinnamon and vetiver. An Indian ayah hurried past me with jingling bangles, a flash of red and green. Singalese servants flitted about, silent white figures with bare feet and tortoiseshell combs in their hair.

And again it was all so familiar, so strangely familiar! I felt that I had been there before and quite startled my husband by saying, "Thank God that I have been permitted to return."

"But you have never been here before," he answered.

"Not in this life," I said, "but now we are in the land where millions of thinking people believe in re-incarnation. Perhaps I am beginning to remember!"

Why, indeed, has my heart always turned to the Orient, like a sunflower to the sun? Why do I sympathise with it so entirely, and understand it better than so many more learned and wiser folk, if I have not been of it in some former life?

On one side our rooms looked out on a tropical garden (the first I had ever seen without glass), shaded by tall cocoanut palms. On the other we overhung the street and looked out upon the harbour. The front of the hotel was a series of wooden porches divided by screens, so that each room had its own

For all the world it was like an old-fashioned Virginia hotel. We went out on ours and revelled in the scene. It had rained again and the air was very sultry, and, probably from the effect of the moisture, the whole sky and atmosphere glowed with a wonderful rose-red light.

We were, of course, in the European quarter of the town, and what we looked at was "The West in the East." But it was a West which the East had conquered and made its own.

Only one thing jarred slightly, the memorial of Queen Victoria on the left-hand side of the quay, which against a green background of bananas and palms, showed like a large sugar ornament on a wedding cake. The personality of this great and good Queen did not lend itself to sculpture. Whether seated or standing, her statues are always pyramidal, and these monuments look especially forced and out-of-place, in an Indian setting. A statue is a cold memorial at the best! Better had it been and more worthy of the royal lady, to have devoted the gold thus spent to the improvement of the lot of her Indian subjects!

My attention was soon diverted to something more interesting. The building opposite, like most of those in the street, was raised on an arcade, under which were shops. One of these was a confectioner's, and before it an elegant equipage drew up, a victoria, drawn by two fine horses, which could have held its own in Hyde Park. On the box were two Singalese in white, their feet bare, and their hair tucked up with combs. Inside sat two Singalese ladies, a rare sight in Colombo, for the aristocracy of Ceylon exists almost entirely in the old Kingdom of Kandy.

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

The ladies, who looked like pale bronze statues, wore the true Kandyan costume, low-necked and short-sleeved bodices of fine white muslin edged with lace, crossed from the left shoulder to the waist by rich silk of emerald green, which then wrapped them round and round tightly and gracefully to the feet. Gold ear-rings were in their ears, gold bracelets on their wrists, and magnificent gold chains were looped round and round their necks, falling below their waists. And all this gold was of rich exquisite Kandyan workmanship. On their heads they wore nothing, like all these women of the South, and their shining black hair was parted in the middle and twisted into a knot on their necks. They entered the confectioner's doubtless to eat ices, the delight of all tropical folk, and I parted from them with regret.

Most Singalese women brush their hair straight back, which is much less soft and becoming. Parting it in the middle is the Indian mode.

I afterwards saw many native ladies at Kandy. Their costume was always the same, only varying in the colour of their silks, when they were Buddhists. But those who were Christians (their ancestors having been converted by the Portuguese) while they kept the muslin bodice wore, instead of the drapery, full flowing skirts of white muslin or silk. In either case the effect was graceful and charming.

The "Oriental" is very simply furnished, but has everything necessary. The splint-bottomed rocking-chairs and the square mosquito nets over the beds, recalled the Virginia Springs and memories of happy days. But there was one thing in every room which was unknown in Old Virginia, and

which I trust may remain unknown for ever there. In the centre of each ceiling was an immense electric fan. Of course in one's own room one could control this instrument of torture, and mine was ever still. But one could not escape it elsewhere, and these fans were my bugbear all over the Indies. I have always disliked wind out of doors, but in the house, ruffling one's hair and blowing everything away, it is, for me, simply intolerable.

English people all over the Indies have told me that it is very hard to get rid of a cold there, and that they almost always have colds. They blame the climate for this, but the fault is not of the climate but their own, for they are always sitting in draughts and fail entirely to understand that the hotter the temperature the more dangerous this is.

It is rather unfortunate for the rest of mankind that the English have acquired dominion over so many tropical countries, since their doing so has rendered them uncomfortable for other people. The English are accustomed to an equable climate, which varies but little all the year round. This climate has naturally given rise to special manners and customs, dress, food and sports. So far so good, but unfortunately the English forget that their climate is unique, and that though all these things suit admirably at home, they do not suit at all in most other parts of the world. Their mistake is that they try to make them suit everywhere.

Cold climates will not permit themselves to be ignored, and therefore in countries which know the rigours of winter the English have become more like other people. In Canada the houses, departing entirely from English precedent, are all well heated,



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

as ours in America. English cooking has been happily modified by the Florida fruits and vegetables and the Baltimore oysters and crabs, which find their way to the Canadian markets. And the Spanish dollar, which came to us from Mexico, has gone from us to Canada, where it has met and conquered the unwieldy guineas, pounds, half-crowns, etc.

But even in Canada the English cling, and not always wisely, to their own customs. Some years ago when I was visiting in Montreal I was surprised to find that ladies who came to pay visits or drink afternoon tea never removed their wraps or furs. The temperature outside was many degrees below zero, and they were dressed in accordance with the weather. And yet they sat holding their hands in their muffs, and then after an hour or more, they went out again into the Arctic winter. How they could do that I could not understand. In all the northern countries of Europe one leaves one's wraps in the ante-chamber when visiting. In Russia one does the same on entering a shop. But in Canada one keeps them on, because one does so in England. In England—where the houses are seldom more than ten degrees warmer than the outside air! In like manner one never sees an English woman in the tropics with a fan in her hand, because they do not use fans in England.

When Europeans or Americans go to tropical or semi-tropical countries for the winter, they revel in the heat, comparing it with delight to the cold that they have left behind at home. But the English people neither enjoy heat nor understand it. In their efforts to escape from and counteract it, they

shut the sun out of their houses and arrange them so as to be always in a draught. A system the effects of which are always injurious and sometimes fatal.

The dining room of the "Oriental" Hotel in Colombo is the finest example of this practice that I know. An immense room, going up through two stories, the two ends are closed in with walls, but the long sides are simply a double row of arches. The side along the sea is protected by a veranda which keeps out the sun, but the sea-breeze (and on my first visit, the monsoon), sweeps through it at its own sweet will. Innumerable electric fans hang from the ceiling by long rods, revolving at a hundred miles an hour, and the whole room being painted sea-green, one has the agreeable sensation of sitting in a submarine whirlpool.

The table at the "Oriental" is considered very good. Certainly the management do their best according to their lights, though if they would rely more on the resources of the country, and less on the canning factories of Europe and America, the result would be much happier. But the service, entirely performed by Singalese, is excellent, and the little breakfasts and teas brought to one on trays and in which a fruit, shaped like a pear magnified and tasting like the richest melon, always plays a part, are very dainty and appetising.

Afterwards, in many Indian hotels I remembered the "Oriental" as the "last word in luxury." It was, in fact, the last word that we heard on the subject for some time.

Colombo is a city of 136,000 inhabitants though it is hard to realize this, for as with most Indian cities, the difficulty is to find it. The Government

buildings and streets on the water-front make an imposing appearance, but, like a scene on the stage, one soon gets behind them, and finds oneself wandering among detached tropical villages. And if one mounts the hills behind, instead of obtaining the view one expects, the city seems to have disappeared entirely and only a few domes and towers rise out of the sea of many-shaded tropical green. But one would not have it otherwise. Religion has been the inspiration of all great architecture, but simple domestic architecture is the result of climate.

Among all this green we found many things of interest—an old Dutch bell-tower, a still older Portuguese church, a small mosque, and the portals of three Hindu temples, rich in carving. The portals, indeed, are all that one is permitted to see for Hindu shrines are nowhere so jealously guarded as in Ceylon. To me it was a wonderful thought that behind them lay Hindu temples, the first that I had ever seen.

Our first morning in Colombo began with a heavy shower. The water in these tropical rains comes down as if it were being poured out of buckets, and the instant after it begins the streets are empty, everyone having taken refuge under the arcades. Soon the sun was flooding everything with gold again and we went out and walked under the arcades. Nearly all the shops were jewellers', and all the jewellers are Hindus. Now, I have seen many Hindus in other countries, but abroad they are not as they are at home.

Religion, as in all things Oriental, is the cause of this. In foreign lands the Hindu is separated from his gods. But at home he is in constant com-

munion with them. Every morning he goes to the temple of the god whom he has chosen as the object of his special devotion, and after he has said his prayers the Brahmins of the shrine mark his forehead with the symbol of the deity. These symbols which are also called "caste marks" are eight in number, four of which indicate the followers of Vishnu and four those of Shiva. They are drawn on the forehead in white, red, or yellow chalk. One sees women marked also, but only with a red or white moon in the middle of the brow. The meaning of these marks is very deep, but they also show one thing which all who run can read—that this people are proud of their religion and wish to show their belief to the world.

As we looked into their windows these men all came out, and invited us to enter. They wore European costume, made in either white linen or pongee, but all had small round caps on their heads, either yellow embroidered in bright colours, or black embroidered in gold. This is the head-dress of Hindu merchants everywhere. We entered two or three of the shops where we were shown all sorts of treasures in Indian and Singalese jewellery and uncut stones. It is a strange thing that in this radiant island glowing with red and green, all the precious stones should be off-colour. But so it is, the rubies are brownish, the sapphires purple or grey, and their prize stone, the "Cat's Eye" is, at its best, an unwholesome yellowish-green.

My fancy was particularly taken by an old Singalese chain two yards or more in length, of which each golden link was wrought into a "wheel of life," and also by the necklaces of cut cornelian balls held

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

in gold filigree flower cups, with strings of seed pearls in between. We did not buy anything on these first visits, which indeed is not expected. The jewellers were all most pleasant and friendly. We had an interesting chat with each one, and I felt that, like other Orientals, they were friends.

Later, my husband bought me five star-sapphires, large, irregular and dove coloured, for we both agreed in liking a bluish-grey rather than a greyish-blue.

## IV

# TROPICAL SUNSHINE AND RAIN

ON the afternoon of the same day we took our first rickshaw ride, and on that memorable occasion the full glory of the tropics was revealed to me for the first time. The rickshaw itself is a pleasant means of conveyance. The men run all the way and one skims along as lightly as a duck on the water.

We went first down to the Galle Face Hotel, which is beautifully placed beside the sea and looks exactly like a New England seaside hotel, and then along the road which is the whole ideal of the tropics and Ceylon. My husband who had been in tropical countries before, was showing me everything and delighted in my realized dream.

I have seen many palms before, in Egypt and the Levant, but the groves were only tufts and the largest one I remember contained only nine trees. But here, palm groves spread on every side and through them glimmered the sea. On each side were wooden native houses with verandas, and delicious bungalows embowered in luxuriant gardens.

We crossed bridges over rivers and passed wonderful pale green ponds. I was in a constant state of rapture and delight! We passed through fishing villages

where the fish lay in heaps of silver on the stalls of the bazaar, and pretty brown children ran after us calling "Good-bye papa, Good-bye mamma! Mamma, you my mamma!" The people in the villages were all Singalese and were all dressed in white. The men are generally handsome and look like bronze-statues, but the women are neither so attractive nor so well-made.

About five we arrived at Mount Lavinia. An hotel which was once the summer residence of the Governors of Ceylon, built on a green promontory, jutting out into the sea. A place of ideal beauty, in the midst of palms and beautiful verdure. We left our rickshaws and mounted a winding path broken by marble steps and covered over with a delicious tropical pergola, which leads to the house, a square English house of grey stone. In front of it on the rounded green top of the cliff, little tables and chairs were set out and people were drinking tea. We found some friends and joined them, but I was too much absorbed in the beauty of the place and hour to pay much attention to my tea.

Below us on the right, curved an ideal little bay, so closely fringed with palm trees that between them and the water there was only the narrowest rim of red sand. Along this rim, tied to the stems of the palms, lay a row of little fishing-boats built of red wood, each with one curved bamboo mast bearing a red-brown sail. Out at sea other such boats sailed slowly by, and the waves curled in so softly that they made no sound as they melted away on the glowing sand in a fringe of pearls.

A slight shower gave us a perfect rainbow over the palms, while on the other side the sun was setting

## TROPICAL SUNSHINE AND RAIN

in the sea. The light was so wonderful that it made one think that he who wrote "a light that never was on sea or land," had not seen Ceylon. It was a picture never to be forgotten. I can see it still, as I sit at my desk in England on a dark rainy day, which proves as I have always believed that beauty, whether in nature or art, on which we look with the heart as well as the eyes is something gained for ever.

The next afternoon we had a unique experience in our first visit to a Buddhist temple. When the Portuguese were in Ceylon they destroyed most of the Buddhist shrines along the coast and converted most of the natives to Christianity, but they never penetrated to the interior. The century and a half of Portuguese rule gave ample time for the new faith to take root and bring forth fruit. Many of the descendants of these first converts, the majority indeed, are the most ardent Catholics still. The forty years of Dutch rule wrought no change in this, but when the island passed to England in 1796, the English gave permission to rebuild the Buddhist temples and there followed a revival of Buddhism.

The temple which we visited is situated in the village of Kelani, two miles outside the town. It escaped destruction at least in part, doubtless because it was the most famous shrine on the coast. The present building which dates from the fourteenth century stands on the site of the first Buddhist temple in Ceylon. This was erected in 306 B.C. by Prince Yatalatissa, who was sent by his father Asoka, the first Buddhist Emperor of India, to convert the Singalese to the doctrines of Gautama Siddartha.

The temple and monastery attached consist of



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

several very unimposing looking buildings of white stone, grouped in a garden on the bank of the Kelani River. The richness is all in the interior, and I was much surprised to find the walls of the vestibule and the corridor surrounding the shrine covered with painted and gilded bas-reliefs representing the gods and demons of the Indian Pantheon. I remarked on this to our guide who was a postulant at the monastery.

"Yes," he said, "it is true. But we have no other style of decoration!" Buddhism is founded on Brahminism, as everyone knows, and I maintain that all that is good in it was taken from the old religion. But Buddhism has been a cult for twenty-five centuries. For twenty-two they have been building temples and have evolved their own architecture. And yet they have the old religious decoration that went before. Strange, wonderful immutability of Oriental thought! Unchanging immortality of Oriental religion!

The plan of the temple is very simple. First there is the vestibule and behind that, surrounded by the corridor, the shrine, built entirely of glass. It is like a large show-case indeed, in which, on a platform about three feet above the floor and filling the entire interior, lies a colossal gilded and painted image of the Buddha. This is the only recumbent Buddha that I had ever seen or heard of, and lying there in weird, unearthly repose the effect it produces is extraordinary.

From the temple proper a passage leads to a little chapel, where votive offerings are made, a chapel with an altar just like one of ours, on which many candles are burning. Flowers are heaped upon it

and strewn upon the steps on which it stands. But for the image of Buddha in the place of the crucifix, one might think it the side chapel in a Catholic church. Does this chapel show the influence of the Portuguese? It is only a hundred and fifty years old. Or is it, as I have often wondered, that we have borrowed from the ritual of Buddhism?

We then asked to see the Abbot to whom we had an introduction, and were taken out into the garden where he came to meet us. And thereby hangs a tale.

Prince Jinavaravana-Thero, of the Royal House of Siam, studied at Oxford where he took his degree. He then entered the Siamese Diplomatic Service and spent many years among the European capitals. Some years ago he renounced the world and returning to the East became a Buddhist monk and was made Abbot of this monastery.

He is a charming and a highly intelligent man, perhaps sixty years of age. Dark, but rather European in type, clean-shaven and with closely-cropped hair, according to the rule, he wore with great dignity the costume of a Buddhist monk, a costume, by the way, quite contrary to our ideas of monastic austerity. It was of the richest canary-coloured silk, draped like a Roman toga, leaving the right arm and shoulder bare.

Outside the monastery the monks often wrap another piece of yellow silk around their shoulders, but they never wear anything on their heads, carrying instead an umbrella of yellow waxed linen or silk. In a country where everyone else is in white linen, the Buddhist monk is the most resplendent figure in the scene.

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

With the Prince Abbot we had a very interesting talk. In connection with my study of Buddhism I asked him if I might assist at a service in the temple. He assented willingly and invited me to remain for a memorial service which they were going to hold that evening for his cousin the King of Siam, who had died a few days before, to pray that he might have a good re-incarnation.

"When will he be born again?" I asked.

"It is time now," he replied.

The temptation to remain was very strong, but alas! we were engaged that evening for a dinner-party, and I was obliged to forego this unique opportunity.

The Abbot then sent us with our former guide to visit the museum which is on the second floor of one of the buildings. Here there are sacred relics of various kinds, the most sacred of all being a piece of the Bo-tree under which, in Budh-Gaya in Bengal, the Buddha sat when he "obtained enlightenment." When we came down again the Abbot was waiting for us with a little basket of flowers which he presented to me. He also gave my husband some palm seeds of a peculiar kind to take home and plant in our "winter garden" in England. After promising to come and see him again on our return to Ceylon we took our leave.

The flowers offered at this shrine and those given to me were the first examples I had had of the use of flowers in the Indies, which seems singular to us.

When Japan was first opened to the world it is said that the Japanese did not know how to kiss, till they were taught by the foreigners. But they

were masters of the art of gathering and arranging flowers, which they preserve as we do in vases of water. This art is still unknown in the Indies where all the flowers are picked with stems one or at the most two inches long, and where they are never put in water. The Indians, however, have always known how to kiss.

In India three uses are made of flowers. They are offered to the gods, that is they are laid on brass or silver trays in front of their images. The dancing girls wear them in their hair. How they pin them on with such short stems, I cannot tell. Certain it is that they would never stay in place on any Western head. They are made into garlands knotted closely along a string and hung round the necks of idols or of honoured guests. Longer garlands are used to decorate the doors of houses on festive occasions and the Pandals (pavilions) used at weddings.

These garlands are most interesting, as they throw a side light on history. The Indians were the first of the Aryan brothers to leave the cradle of their race, but they alone have preserved the customs which they brought with them. And to understand many things about the Greeks and Latins in their early days (the Teutons and Slavs left their original home much later), we have only to look at their counterparts in India to-day.

These garlands are the same as those which we see in Greek and Roman sculpture, which were suppressed by the stern asceticism of early Christianity.

The old Celts and later the Teutons wore garlands and hung them about their altars and sacred groves in Gaul and Germany. These garlands were more fortunate than the others, for the milder and truer

spirit which obtained among the apostles of the North not only permitted but fostered the love of flowers. And so these Aryan garlands lasted on, north of the Alps, down through the Middle Ages.

In Burma there are no garlands. Burma is Mongol and Aryan influences are there unknown. One sees the short-stemmed flowers piled up on trays in the bazzars. All the young women wear them in their hair when *en grande toilette*, and they are offered in the shrines of the pagodas.

In Ceylon I have seen but one use made of flowers. There may be others. I have been three times in Ceylon, though never in the spring when the roses are in bloom, but there are flowers all the year round and never have I seen them anywhere outside the gardens where they grow, except on the altars of Buddha or those of Our Lord. The Singalese are indeed a deeply religious people and whatever faith they own, will give to it not only their flowers but their hearts.

From the Buddhist monastery, we went to the Portuguese cathedral of Santa Lucia, a beautiful shining white Romanesque church. The interior is very noble and devotional, pure white but for the holy pictures inset above the altars. Here, too, as at the Buddhist shrine, candles and flowers are on the altar and the perfume of incense is in the air. But it is not a dead and soul-less Buddha which holds the central place before the ever-burning lamp. I knelt down on the steps before the high altar and thanked God with all my heart that *this* temple was *mine*!

Till now we had been playing with the monsoon, or rather it had been playing with us, but we were

destined to see it in its most serious mood. Just as we started for our dinner-party which was given at the Galle Face Hotel, it began to rain and blow with such violence that only with difficulty did we reach our destination. Once there we thought little more about it. Dinner was followed by a dance which was very bright and gay, like all Indian dances. But when we started on our return to the "Oriental" we found that the water was still coming down with a force which reminded me of Niagara. All night it rained in the same way, all through the next day, which was Sunday, and all the following night.

No one who has not lived through a monsoon can imagine what it was like! I am a salamander in my love of heat. I have never felt any dry heat that was too much for me. But the sultriness of the air during this time and which daily increased was simply overpowering. The thought of making any exertion seemed preposterous. I could not have gone down into the "whirlpool" if the alternative had been starvation. I simply sat in a *peignoir* in my room or on my veranda until it was over.

I was once in a cyclone at sea, and as we came out of it safely I have always been glad to have had the experience. My feeling about the monsoon is the same. But I trust that I may never again meet with one or the other.

On Monday it rained intermittently, but we were able to get out between the showers. On Tuesday it cleared up definitely about noon, and we were told that, as the monsoon was already past its time, there would be no more rain till next June. Taking advantage of this happy circumstance, our friend,

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

Mr. McD. took us for a beautiful drive to Victoria Park and the Cinnamon Gardens. Victoria Park is a botanical garden, but I will not describe it as I saw much finer ones elsewhere.

The Cinnamon Gardens were once what their name implies. Now they are the foreign residential quarter and consist of European villas in tropical gardens. Charming indeed they were and I would fain have lingered, but we could not, for we were to leave Ceylon on a French steamer at six o'clock. Mr. McD. accompanied us on board and took tea with us there, and at sunset we sailed out into the Arabian Sea once more. This time for Bombay.

# V

## THE GATE OF INDIA

THE sea seems to be always rough around the point of India. On our first night out and the following day also, our old French "tramp" (for that was all it was, as we discovered when too late) rolled very disagreeably. A rare old boat it was, thirty years old, and making its last journey from Cochin China to France. Twice a day we were obliged to stop for half an hour to cool its machinery, but, in spite of all this, we were very comfortable. There were only eight passengers on board, and we had a deck-house to ourselves consisting of two rooms, which were, considering everything, quite luxurious. We also had the stern-deck practically to ourselves, and as from the second day on it became calm and beautiful the voyage was very pleasant.

We passed along the Malabar coast without seeing it, but every evening just before sunset we were rejoiced by the sight of an enchanted island. These islands were all just alike, all mountains, palms and tropical green. They corresponded exactly with the descriptions of enchanted islands which we all knew by heart at one time, and as they always appeared in the same way and at the same hour (and as it is well



known that enchanted islands are not stationary), it may have been, like the Fata Morgana, always the same.

On the third day we saw for the first time the coast of India, a low-lying, golden tinted shore. A little fleet of picturesque brown fishing boats, with warm brown sails, came quite near and added the charm of life to the picture. And from that land, so long imagined and desired, the "Indian airs" blew over us, soft as velvet and fresh as dew. The next morning at dawn we anchored in the inlet of Bombay. We were some miles out, but in that crystal atmosphere we saw distinctly the brilliant white city, which seemed to hover like a mirage between the turquoise sky and the shining water.

Our old tramp lay waiting for a tender which did not arrive. By nine o'clock our patience was worn out. My husband and I embarked on a native fishing-boat which had come alongside, leaving our man and maid to follow with the luggage when occasion served. Once in the boat and away, we realized that it was rather a hazardous undertaking. The five men to whom we had entrusted ourselves, apparently Malays, were as wild and piratical looking a crew as one could imagine. And Bombay was much farther away than it seemed. But Heaven watched over us! In an hour, by the help of oars and our brown flapping sail, we landed on the stone steps of the Apollo Bunder. It was Saturday, the fifth of November.

Whence the name of the Apollo Bunder I cannot tell. It is a pier or rather a landing-stage surmounted by a stone pavilion in Saracenic *style*. I will not call it *architecture*. It is a pleasant place in its way,

and being close to the hotel I several times strolled out there and enjoyed the coming and going of the launches and sailing-boats.

On landing, we walked across to the Taj Mahal, a large but not very pleasing structure. It is however very well built and wonderfully ventilated, and the courtyard which is really a tropical garden with a fine fountain in the centre is simply charming. We got a delightful suite of rooms, a large sitting-room with a polished rubble floor and furniture suited to the tropical climate. An attractive dressing-room, a bath, and a bed-room with nothing in it but two iron bedsteads under mosquito canopies, an electric lamp on a tiny round table and one small Turkish rug on the stone floor. This arrangement struck me as curious at first, but I soon became accustomed to it. All real Indian bed-rooms have nothing in them but beds, as they are simply and solely places in which to sleep.

The hotel is very bright and gay, but it has one serious drawback, and that is its food, which is simply atrocious. Everything is flat and greasy, the lowest development of Anglo-Indian cookery. I wish I could forget it, but I cannot, and neither can I forgive the impertinence of its name, the "Taj Mahal."

All this part of Bombay, which contains the Government buildings, the railway station and European houses and shops is still called the Fort. Presumably it occupies the site of the old fort built by the English in 1672. The first English settlement in India was made at Surat in 1608. The Portuguese had been there a hundred years before them and were firmly established along the west coast. At

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

that time the custom of giving away cities and provinces as the dowries of princesses still prevailed, a custom often most unfortunate in its results. In 1661 the island of Bombay was ceded to England as part of the marriage portion of Katherine of Braganza, though its possession was not actually transferred until 1665.

The name of the island is not Indian, as most people suppose, but a corruption of the Portuguese *Bon Bahia*. In 1668 Charles II conferred it on the East India Company. They built the fort, between 1672 and 1674, around which soon grew a town and then the city, now the largest in the Indian peninsula. In 1788 Surat became untenable and the East India Company transferred their headquarters to Bombay. Had they not possessed this little island, they might have been forced to withdraw, and Indian history might have been entirely changed. Little did the Portuguese think, when in their eagerness for the English alliance, they made over this small island, that they were giving to England the key of India.

Our first day in Bombay we engaged a native servant, which we had been told was absolutely necessary. We found it absolutely the reverse, as the dialects are so different in the various provinces that we were obliged to take a second man in almost every place we visited. But nevertheless, I was very glad to have him, for the opportunity it gave me of studying the Hindu character at close range. And indeed he was a most faithful and devoted servant. His name which was Rama (after the immortal hero of the *Ramayana*), made me feel at home at once. He, in turn, was delighted to find (as he did very

quickly) that I was familiar with Indian literature and still more with Indian religion. His manner towards me henceforth was full of the most touching appreciation, because I knew and respected his gods!

I may say here that I met with the same gratitude and sympathy from every Hindu with whom I had the opportunity of talking. And it made me realize how often their most sacred sentiments, not to mention their natural feelings, are outraged by the malice or the thoughtlessness of strangers. I believe in all religions myself. God has given them to other peoples, as he has given ours to us, and I consider that everyone should show that consideration and respect towards the faith of others which he claims for his own.

At four o'clock we went out under the guidance of Rama and drove for two hours along the sea-shore and then up to Malabar Hill. The villas of the rich Parsees lined the way, each in its own garden. Very interesting they all are and some of them quite magnificent. We saw the gilded cupolas of a Hindu temple (among the trees in a garden) which none but Hindus are allowed to enter. This was a place of pilgrimage sacred to Shiva. Farther on we passed the high white walls of the gardens of the Towers of Silence. Majestic wide-spreading trees rise above these walls, thus realizing the green coolness and shade of the Persian "Paradaizo," from which comes our word "Paradise."

Bombay is the second largest city in India, and, despite the fact that everything has been done to Occidentalize and spoil it, it is one of the most interesting cities in the world. The quarters of the natives present a blaze of colour and a picture of Indian life nowhere surpassed. But its greatest charm and

interest are in the people who throng its streets and bazaars, for here the whole Orient meets. As in everything else Oriental, religion is the key-note of the scene. Perfect toleration exists, but every man must show what he is, and sail under his own flag. By an original and very practical scheme, each one expresses his religious belief by means of his head-dress. For instance, the old school Parsee wears a black stove-pipe hat, without a brim, the new school Parsee affects a curious cap of black patent leather, which looks as if he had a hand satchel on his head, while the Bagdad Jew dons a head-piece of a similar shape, but that it is white, and he is often distinguished by his long white beard. The Hindu merchants wear small black caps embroidered in gold, like those one sees in Ceylon, while the lower classes (whose appearance is much more noble) wear turbans of bright-coloured silk or cotton, generally red. The Brahmins, whom I now met with for the first time, wear turbans of white muslin. Besides all these various Hindu head-dresses, or rather in addition to those, there are variations of form and colour which indicate the especial religious devotion of the wearer. But my time in Bombay was too short to study them all.

The finest looking men one sees are the Mohammedans, easily distinguished by their tall figures and majestic bearing. They all wear turbans, larger than those of the Hindus, sometimes of coloured silk, but generally they are white. The Pathans, the descendants of the first Mohammedan conquerors of India, who came down with Mahmoud of Ghazni in the year 1000 A.D. and continued their invasion through the eleventh century, wear a black peaked

cap around which their turbans are twisted. The descendants of the Moghuls affect the round or pear-shaped turban formerly worn by the Turks.

The women, as is usually the case in India, are still more interesting than the men. Many Hindus have adopted European coats and sometimes trousers also, only retaining their sashes and turbans. But the Hindu women have clung to their own beautiful and graceful costumes with unswerving and universal fidelity.

There are different costumes in the different provinces of India, which I shall describe in the course of this narrative. Of these the best known in Europe and therefore the one generally referred to as the "Indian dress," is the saree, which is worn in the Presidency of Bombay. This consists of a long piece of silk or cotton stuff, which is wound lightly about the lower part of the figure, then drawn up over the left shoulder from the waist and fastened on the head, from which it falls again in ample folds, thus forming a skirt and veil in one. Under this is worn a low-necked bodice with short sleeves, made of muslin and lace, similar to that worn in Ceylon; but this latter garment is an innovation, dating no further back than the Mohammedan conquests, for it is a garment necessarily cut and sewn and the Hindus, though the first nation in the world to excel in the art of weaving, did not know how to sew until that art was introduced by the Mohammedans, who brought it from Central Asia. Before that, and in many parts of India still, clothing is simply draped as among the Greeks and Romans.

It is, therefore, curious to note that while the

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

bodice of a woman of Bombay cannot be older than the eleventh century, A.D., her saree is pre-historic. The majority of Indian women wear nothing under their sarees, which though falling in folds are more or less transparent, as they are made of light thin material. But this does not matter, as in India clothes are worn for distinction or ornament not for concealment of the figure.

The colours of the Bombay women are generally scarlet or yellow, often adorned with variously coloured borders and still more often the whole stuff is figured in an Indian design. This question of colours has always interested me very much, so that I will stop for a moment to dwell upon it.

In all Mohammedan countries which I have visited, the women dress themselves in four colours, pink, crimson, lilac and sky-blue. As green is the colour of the prophet, it is forbidden to all, except his descendants and the members of the reigning families. The only exception to this rule is that all those men who have made a pilgrimage to Mecca may assume the green turban. But I have wondered why the women do not wear yellow, and found no answer to this question. It is worn in Turkey to some extent, but for my own part, I have never seen but one Turkish lady, the wife of a Pasha, dressed in yellow.

The Indian woman is always loaded with jewellery, whether of pearls, precious stones, gold, silver, brass or glass. She wears ear-rings, a pendant on her forehead, sometimes a nose-ring, which is much more becoming than it sounds, necklaces and chains around her neck, bracelets and bangles from her wrists to her elbows and anklets, sometimes two

or three on each ankle. These latter, no matter the wealth of the wearer, or how she may glitter with jewels, enamel or gold, are always made of silver. The reason for this being that gold is considered too noble to carry on the feet. Nor do the Indian women wear their jewels as we do, when they are *en toilette*, but they wear them always. The poor women do their household work in their jewels, and many of them thus carry constantly about with them several pounds' weight of gold and silver.

Having described the costume of the women of Bombay at such length, I shall only say of themselves that they are full of natural grace and beauty, as are indeed all the women of India, of whom I shall have much more to say.

The Parsee women wear the same costume, and though they do not equal the Indian women in beauty or in grace, still as they are nearly all rich and able to have whatever they want, their appearance is very pleasing. Their taste in colours is for lighter shades, such as pink, lemon-yellow, lavender and pale blue. They wear only silk and the borders of their sarees are always embroidered in gold or silver, sometimes on a band of black velvet.

Their taste in jewellery is also different. They avoid all heavy ornaments and generally wear long diamond ear-rings, diamond bracelets and strings of pearls. They are paler than the Hindu women, having cream-coloured complexions. Their features are regular, but rather impassive, and they lack colour and animation. Their black hair is parted in the middle and in the case of married women, bound with a white linen band. A severe coiffure,



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

which however one only sees when their veils are removed.

The Parsees have, as everyone knows, been noted for honesty, morality, learning, indeed one might say for all the virtues, ever since their arrival in India after the Mohammedan conquest of Persia. Their family life is very happy and beautiful. Every afternoon from four to six the Parsee ladies are out walking with their husbands, while one meets carriages full of young Parsee girls, and the elegance which they add to the Indian scene is both charming and attractive.

Of the Mohammedan women one sees but little. And no wonder, since when going out they are obliged to muffle themselves in a manner which must mean little less than suffocation in such a temperature as that of Bombay. Only in the bazaars I have seen a few of them. Of their costume one cannot speak. They are covered from head to foot with a voluminous veil of heavy silk, crimson or lilac, with only a lattice work of silken cord over their eyes, in which way they are allowed respiration and somewhat restricted vision.

While the Oriental parts of the city are so rich in interest and charm, the European quarter can only be admired by those whose ambition it is to make all the world alike. To such persons, indeed, it is full of fine buildings, Governmental and otherwise. These buildings may be classified as "mongrel eclectic." They are composed of colonnades, arches (pointed or round), balconies, turrets, windows, bulls-eyes, pillars and pilasters, among which the eye seeks in vain for rest. In Manchester, Birmingham or Glasgow their bewildering variety might enliven

the greyness of the smoky surroundings, but in India. . . .

When the English conquered India, the Indian Saracenic architecture was still in flower. There were living, Indian architects and skilled workers in stone who needed but the patronage of the conquerors to produce new marvels of their art. But of all the buildings erected by the English Government since those days, not one has been designed by an Indian architect, and only one, in Madras, (which I have not seen) has been built in the Indian Saracenic style.

Architects and even masons were brought from England and now, a revival of the lost art would be impossible, as the Indian architects are dead and forgotten, and the Indian stonecutters have so lost their cunning that when the tardy thought of any restoration arises, it is almost impossible to find anyone able to carry it out.

What a painful contrast between this and the enlightened action of the Moghul conquerors who, appreciating the force, richness and originality of Indian architecture, cultivated and combined it with their own, thus bringing about the marvellous result of the incomparable Indian Saracenic. To the descendants of the great Timour, indeed, belongs the honour of developing and bringing this art to perfection—to the English conquerors, the reproach of disdaining and extinguishing the Arts of India!

The next day was Sunday and I went to Mass at the radiantly white church, which belongs to an English order, and where the sermon was in English, though most of the congregation were Indians and Eurasians, descended from the converts of the

Portuguese. In the afternoon we took another drive along the sea, past the Parsee villas and out beyond to the salt marshes which stretch wild and lonely between the sandhills and the blue water. Thence, back again to the Victoria Gardens through which we walked, enjoying the beauty of the tropical plants and flowers. Others were walking there also, Eurasian families for the most part. The men wore light European clothes and the women white, pink or blue muslins, with wide skirts, making a very pretty effect in the midst of the vivid green.

Hindu ladies were there too, in semi-transparent sarces and glittering with jewellery, while men-servants followed them carrying little children, in caps and tunics of gold-embroidered velvet, astride on their hips. The poorer women carry their children in this way themselves and, unlike most primitive customs, I am convinced that it is a very bad habit. The mother throws out her right hip in a way which must in the course of time distort it, the child's position is strained and uncomfortable and the effect is unpleasant and ungraceful, the only ungraceful thing that I remember to have seen in India.

Thence we drove back through the native quarter, brilliant with life and colour, past houses with richly carved fronts, some of them with upper stories overhanging the street, past Hindu temples and gaudy modern mosques, then through the brass-workers' bazaar, bright with a glow of gold, and gay with the tinkling of hammers. Then on, past the shops of innumerable jewellers, of which there are nearly three thousand, for jewellery is the one great Indian investment.

Then again past bullock-carts and Arabian horses, and countless sights and sounds of the Orient, more than one can remember, but all merged in the realization that round us was beating the whole passionate heart of the East. Yes, all was there that I had so long dreamed of and longed to see! But there was something more, which clung to and followed it like a shadow, for the Plague was raging in Bombay, and claiming a hundred and fifty victims a day!

I was not afraid of it. All these things are in the hands of God. But it was the indifference with which it was treated by the English and other foreigners which made me unhappy, and ashamed of the heartlessness of the twentieth century. How often have we all read and shuddered over the accounts of the visitation of the Plague in Europe in mediæval times, notably the Great Plague of 1348, and the Plague of London in King Charles the Second's time. Even now we saw in Reuter's despatches that no ships from Bombay would be permitted to land passengers or freight in English ports, and yet, here we were in Bombay, and the Plague was entirely ignored. "We do not get it," said those to whom I spoke. "Only the natives, and the Government looks after them." And they went on calmly drinking whisky and soda and afternoon tea.

The Government does take care of "only the natives" in its own way. It takes them from their homes (generally very much against their will) to a fine hospital provided for that special purpose, where two out of every three die and the third recovers and goes back to his own life again, or to what is left of it for him, as this forcible treatment often

means losing his caste which is more precious to him than his life.

The Hindu, indeed, must submit to this as to many other things which the Government considers for his good, but the Parsees will not. Being rich and charitable, the Parsees have built a hospital of their own, where their own people are tended by Parsee doctors and nurses. According to their belief, should they die under the care of those who are not of their religion, their mortal remains will be excluded from the Towers of Silence.

The mediæval pestilence lasted for one year. In the case of the Great Plague for two. In 1910, this terrible disease had existed in Bombay for fourteen years! Sometimes rampant, sometimes passant, sometimes couchant, like an heraldic beast, but always there, whether ramping in the sunshine or lurking in the shade.

The hospitals were built for its victims years ago, and have never been empty since. A war with as yet undetermined results, is being waged on the rats, but as everyone admits, there is but one real way of stamping the scourge out, and that is by burning the quarter of the city in which it has made its nest. Thus and thus only was it conquered after a similar riot of years in Hong Kong.

Why then is this not done?

Ah! Because it is too expensive. Property is valuable in Bombay and the owners of these crowded tenements where Death is king would have to be indemnified by the "English Government." What does it matter if a few thousand Hindus are sacrificed every year. Millions of Chinese were offered annually on the altar of the Anglo-Indian opium trade. We

must have civilization and commercial advantages at any price (for others) and there are always too many people in India and China.

There is then no remedy. But at least there is consolation in the fact that the Hindu dies more easily than we do, and with less regret, believing, as he does, that he is not leaving this world for ever, which we all love so well. Soon again he will return and, as he hopes, it may be in some much brighter or happier incarnation.

I could only go to our church and join in the prayers which are daily offered for the cessation of the Plague. God is all merciful, and sooner or later those prayers will be answered. Perhaps the others who seem so indifferent, the white rulers of this dark country, are praying also, and perhaps after all, the poor patient Hindus do not need our prayers as much as we need theirs. God only knows !

## VI

# CAVES OF THE PAST AND TOWERS OF THE FUTURE

**O**F all the wonderful sights of Bombay the two most wonderful are the island of Elephanta and the Towers of Silence. Both are so famous that no minute description of either is necessary here. I shall merely give my impressions.

Those who love to know the exact measurements of things, the number of columns, and the geometrical angles at which everything is placed can easily refer to the guide-book—though I may remark that Murray's, the only available guide-book at the time of my visit to India, was full of mistakes. Such for instance, as the statement (in the two and a half pages which it devotes to an account of the religion of Islam) that "Mohammed was the son of a poor merchant of Mecca, who died soon after his birth!" Such mistakes are unexcusable.

Mohammed, as everyone should know, belonged to the most noble family of Arabia, that of El Hashim, of the tribe of the Koresh. It is a striking fact that the founders of all the great religions were men belonging to the highest castes. The grandfather of Mohammed, Abd-el-Mutalib, was the hereditary Prince of Mecca and guardian of the Kaaba. His rank and office were entailed on the eldest son.

Abdallah, Mohammed's father being one of the youngest of twelve sons and dying during his father's life-time, six months before Mohammed's birth, the latter was left poor in this world's goods. For this reason, when obliged to choose a profession in life he accepted the position of leader of her caravan to the widow, Kadija, who a little later became his wife.

But to return to Murray's Guide; the principal fault is that the fact is often completely lost sight of that the book should be a guide to India, and not merely a record of the exploits and achievements of the English in India. As for instance, each one of the hideous modern buildings and monuments is described with the greatest elaboration and tender care, as though it were the most consummate production of art. *Ten* pages are devoted to the account of the Mutiny and *two* to the whole previous history of India. The minds of those who have compiled the book are strictly mathematical and we may rely implicitly on their figures and dates. The amount which things *have cost* are an especial delight to the compilers.

The island of Elephanta is a beautiful and remarkable island about six miles out from the Fort of Bombay. I may truly say that I saw there the most wonderful thing that I have ever seen (a wonder by the way which Murray fails to mention at all) and that was the orchard of mangrove trees growing before the island *in the sea*!

We reached Elephanta in a steam launch, or nearly reached it, for we were obliged to descend into a rowing boat, which in turn deposited us on a break-water of large blocks of stone quite separated from



each other, stepping stones, in fact, from one of which to the next we stepped, holding on to the chain by which they are connected.

Once on this remarkable structure, I found myself in the grove of mangroves, the gentle swell of the Arabian Sea lapping about their trunks, their leafy crowns undulating in the breeze. The sight was startling. I could obtain no explanation of it, so therefore I have none to give, but I had been looking for enchanted islands and it seemed that I had found one at last. An island of mystery it is, and more than all, a sacred island.

The wind was blowing all around it and ruffling the sea, but once on shore, amid the palms and coriander bushes which cover the island with their luxuriant growth, a charmed calm and stillness reigned. The sunlight seemed softer and more mellow and one was irresistibly reminded of the land of the Lotus-eaters, where it was always afternoon.

The island rises at a rapid incline, the caves being two hundred and fifty feet above the sea. But the way is easy, as one ascends by flights of low stone steps, broken by paths between, which, winding among the coriander thicket, give the place somewhat the air of an Italian garden forgotten and grown wild.

Our first sight of the rock-cut temple was quite overwhelming. One comes upon it suddenly, the mountain seeming to open and offer its secret. The whole effect is one of majestic, supernatural repose. One enters, awe-stricken, the central cave of the three, and at once is forcibly reminded of the temples of Egypt. This resemblance haunts one, but it is impossible to establish any connection, except that

of the instinctive thought and feeling with which the architects were inspired. For although the temples which it recalls are of Pharaohic times, the caves of Elephanta, as we see them now, are no older than the eighth century of our own era.

Sacred the caves themselves have always been, according to tradition, and it is believed that during the thousand years when Buddhism threw its shadow over India, they were used as Buddhist hermitages, but as the temple of Shiva it dates from the seventh and eighth centuries. This is a most interesting date, as this is one of the first temples which commemorate the fall of Buddhism and the reconquest of India by her own gods.

The two oldest temples in India are of the same period, those at Rattadakal and Cinmalli, besides these there are none bearing an earlier date than the eleventh century, while most belong to the thirteenth century.

As we had learned in Ceylon, the Buddhists had adopted the Indian form of decoration in their temples, which was sculpture portraying the Brahminical mythology. "Because they knew no other." But in turn, when Brahminism was restored as the State religion of India, the Brahmins took possession of the Buddhist temples, and though none of those of that period, except the rock-cut, are still in existence, the Buddhist architecture was the foundation and the source of the Hindu, which gradually developed along three different lines, known as the Indo-Aryan, Dravidian and Cholukyian.

It is a constant source of surprise that while in India we find the oldest religion, civilization and culture which exist in the world, preserved almost

unchanged by the oldest branch of the Aryan race, yet there is nothing really old in architecture. The answer is, however, simpler than it appears. Though Gautama lived and taught in the sixth century before Christ, his cult made but little progress and received no official recognition until three centuries later. Then the Emperor Asoka, who reigned from 272 to 231 B.C., accepted it and made it the state religion which it remained nominally for 2 thousand years. The temples and palaces which existed before Asoka's time were built of wood and perished long before the reign of Buddhism was over.

Asoka built in stone, but even then, he built no temples. Strictly speaking, there can be no such thing as a Buddhist temple, because a temple is the shrine of a god, and the house of adoration and prayer, and Buddhism denies the existence of a god and prohibits adoration and prayer. It seeks to substitute for both a vain and empty meditation. Vain and empty, indeed, was the whole scheme of Gautama's philosophy and utterly unable to retain its hold over human hearts, which turn instinctively to prayer—prayer to the old gods whom they have known too long to forget, to whom they pray to-day in Burma and Siam, and to whose worship they returned so long ago in India and so recently in Japan.

What Asoka and his successors erected were in the beginning only memorials of the Buddha or, as we call them, monuments. The oldest of these were the lats or memorial pillars—monoliths surmounted by Buddhist emblems, such as lions or wheels. Then there are the Topes or Stupas, circular solid towers, built to commemorate some event in the life of

Gautama, or to contain relics. Being solid masses of masonry, some of these still remain, notably the Great Top of Sarnath. And lastly, the Chaityas (Halls of Assembly) and Viharas (monasteries). The Topes have developed in other lands where Buddhism has spread into dagobas and pagodas, and the Chaitya has followed the natural and inevitable course of events and become a temple.

There are three caves at Elephanta. The central and principal one follows the plan of the Chaitya consisting of a nave and aisles divided by rows of pillars. But the shrine is not, as in the Chaityas in a niche in the end wall but stands at one side of the hall like a small room, raised four feet above the floor. Doors open on each of its four sides, guarded by stone door-keepers—Dwarpals, as they are called. Each door is reached by steps and inside one finds the Lingam, a cylindrical stone three feet high, the emblem of Shiva, and again one is reminded of the Egyptian shrines.

The pillars of the hall are very curious, having square bases, fluted necks and cushion capitals. All the walls are covered with sculptures in high relief representing scenes from the myths of Shiva. Pillars and sculptures alike are much mutilated, but the wreckage was not wrought by the hand of Time. The Portuguese brought cannon up to the mouth of the cave and fired them in, to show the Indians that Shiva had no power to defend or avenge himself. The result was that his worshippers bowed to the stronger God and became Christians. But nothing ever dies in India and still to-day at certain festivals, crowds of pilgrims come from far and near to pay their tribute of devotion at the Lingam shrine. Nor

is this adoration as strange as it seems to us. Shiva is known to the outside world as the Destroyer, and is said to be worshipped through fear. But this is not all. Shiva is also the reproducer, and as such he is worshipped in hope, and in faith, which looks through death and re-incarnation to Paradise.

The most interesting of the mural sculptures, the marriage of Shiva and Parvati, has almost entirely escaped the Portuguese cannon, owing to the fact that it is behind the Lingam shrine. This is most happy, as the scene which it portrays shows a feeling, one may say poetry, rare in Hindu sculpture, which is generally conceived on the most formal lines.

Shiva, youthful and handsome, stands on the left, on *his Right* is Parvati, the goddess of beauty. To stand on her husband's right is a privilege vouchsafed to the Hindu wife only on her wedding day. Beyond Parvati is seated Brahma, as the Priest of the gods, reading the sacred texts suited to the marriage ceremony. Behind her, stands her father Himalaya, who is pushing her forward to overcome her virginal reluctance. At Shiva's left is Vishnu, and among the other attendants is Chandra, the Moon God, bearing a jar of water for the ceremony. The whole sculpture has been most beautifully described by F. W. Bain in the preface of his "*Mine of Faults*," and has probably been the inspiration of that charming story.

The east wing of the temple is another cave, containing an open courtyard, in the centre of which was formerly a statue of the Nandi bull, while on one side a temple on a terrace is cut out of the rock and is approached by steps with lions at the top. This terrace temple, which contains another

Lingam shrine is the most beautiful and graceful part of the whole.

The west wing of the cave also contains a courtyard, which being much lower than the other cave, was, when we saw it, a pool of water clear and beautiful, and this added very much to the romantic effect, although it prevented our reaching the small open Lingam shrine on the west side.

Our enjoyment of the temple was really intense. It is all so strange and wild, so overpowering and weirdly beautiful. We lingered there as long as we could, but the wind was rising and the sun was getting low and, as it afterwards proved, we had a wild passage back across the water and a most difficult and dangerous landing. As we moved slowly away, still looking back at the mountain, which had again swallowed up the temple, we were invited to enter the rest-house and have tea. Tea after Elephanta! No, I could not possibly drink tea then or there, any more than I can eat my lunch when I make a pilgrimage to Assisi!

The next day we visited the Towers of Silence. On the way there we passed the Parsee Darmsala, a large building erected by the rich Parsees of Bombay for the reception and entertainment of poor Persian Parsees. This whole hospice stands in a small park, in which is a large tank, and presents a most friendly and delightful appearance. I often wonder why those who sing the praises of Buddhism (of which they often know nothing) do not learn something of the Parsees, whose virtues, good deeds and endless charity would give them a much truer and more noble theme of praise. The garden of the Towers of Silence is, as I have already said, one of

the most beautiful and peaceful places I have ever seen.

On entering the outer gate, one mounts a flight of eighty steps to the inner gate, passing through which one seems to leave the world behind. Great spreading trees invite one to rest in their shade, tall cypresses point to heaven and the only aspect of death suggested here is repose.

Turning to the right, one comes to a long low building of grey stone. This is the Prayer House, in which prayers are offered at funerals, and in which burns the Sacred Fire, the emblem of Ahura Mazda, The One God.

Beyond this is a raised terrace approached by stone steps, softly shaded and bright with flowers. Here the bier is placed, and the face of the dead uncovered, so that the mourners who accompany it may have their last look and take their last farewell. Thence it is borne away by four men called "Nar Salars" (carriers of the dead). Two others, with long beards and dressed in white follow, and when the Towers are reached they only enter, carrying the body and placing it side by side with the last who has been laid there, and to be followed by the next who comes. So that the words of Zoroaster Spitama may be fulfilled, "In death the rich and poor shall meet."

The Towers, which are very large in girth, but only twenty-five feet high, are open to the sky. The moment a corpse is placed there, the vultures which are always seated in a ring around the parapet of each tower, descend upon it and in half an hour nothing but the bones are left. These are collected into the central well, and when turned to dust are

filtered through charcoal and pass out through long drains into the sea.

This form of interment originates in the Parsee belief of the sacredness of the elements and their horror of polluting them. Fire is the most sacred, water the second and earth is the third, wherefore no dead body can be committed to either of them. This manner of disposing of the dead is absolutely sanitary and has the additional advantage of occupying a comparatively small and never increasing space.

At the moment of our arrival at the terrace, the body of a little girl had just been borne away to the Towers. The mourners, all in white, were still sitting there in silence. We drew back and waited and presently they all arose and took their way to the House of Prayer. We then ascended the steps to the terrace, and sitting there among the flowers, we saw for the first time, the Towers.

No stranger is allowed to approach them nearer than this, but here the model of a tower is shown to visitors by which one comprehends their interior arrangement. Four of the towers stand near together and the fifth at some distance among the trees. But of them all one sees only the upper part, white and shining among the tropical green, with the solemn ring of vultures perched on each, waiting in silence.

I had hoped and longed to enter the Prayer House and look upon the Sacred Fire, but it was not permitted.

"Only Parsees may enter," said the guardian.

"But," I said, "I know and believe in your religion."

"You must believe in it and no other," was the



answer. I could say nothing more, since indeed I believe in all religions.

But of all the religions of the East, the Mazda Yaçna, which is the religion of the Parsees is the most true and beautiful. It was the first monotheism revealed to the world, and its founder, Zarathustra Spitama (generally known as Zoroaster) taught the doctrines of Heaven and Hell and the resurrection of the dead, doctrines almost identical with our own.

The Mazda Yaçna religion is fifteen centuries older than ours, indeed some authorities affirm that it is still older. It has been expatriated from its own land and has made itself another home, but it has been the most steadfast and remains the most unchanged of all the religions of the world. A pure faith it is and a wise one also, with the wisdom which endures the test of time. A religion which is at the same time strict, whilst entirely devoid of asceticism, and this may be perhaps one chief reason why it has never gone astray. Its six great principles are: The efficacy of prayer, truthfulness, charity, the highest regard for human life, marriage, gratitude to God and the duty of accepting and enjoying all his gifts.

This is a fine code of morality, which has gone hand in hand with the faith which inspired it through all these centuries, and remained a light undimmed by time or change, or even persecution, still burning on, bright and clear as its own Sacred Fire. A lamp perchance from whose pure flame in days to come the burnt-out candles of the world may be re-lit!

Fain would I linger on a subject so congenial, for of all the religions of the Orient I love the Mazda

Yagna best. But, indeed, everything is so dear to me in these lands of the sun, and so hard is it for me to turn away from each that it has been predicted by one who knows my mind that this book would fill two hundred volumes.

Feeling quite sure that in that case it would never be read, I must resist the temptation. I have written at length and given the result of all my researches on the religion of the Parsces in my "Key to the Orient," and all who are interested in this subject can read about it there, if they do not feel disposed to undertake those studies for themselves. But there is one thing to which I have called attention in my book, and which I will repeat here, since to some it may be of interest and give food for thought.

Zarathustra inspired the belief among his followers that sometime the Son of God (a divinity not elsewhere indicated in his teachings) would come, as man, to redeem the world. For centuries this idea lingered in the Persian mind, like a seed in the earth, and at last put forth a single flower. The first to adore our Lord Jesus Christ as He lay in the manger at Bethlehem was neither Jew nor Roman, but the three Magi, Zarathustrian priests who "came from a far country," Persia, to adore "Him" whose star they had seen in the east.

## VII

### THE SACRED MOUNTAIN

**T**HESE are a few last glimpses of Bombay.  
Extracts taken from my diary:—

“We went to the Sassoon Villa, which stands immense and empty, in a neglected garden. We went over it and found it all verandas and windows with Venetian shutters. The rooms were large, painted and stuccoed in pink, blue, green, lilac or yellow. It made me think of another house of theirs, beside the sea, yet how unlike!—their Villa at Brighton where King Edward of happy memory, was so often their guest.

“Then we paid a visit to the house or rather palace of a great Parsee family. Two curving stone staircases led up to the front entrance, on each step there stood a turquoise majolica pot full of brilliant flowers, which gave the effect of the arch of a rainbow. The Patriarch of the family instructed his grandson, a handsome boy of ten, to show us the great hall and the salon over it which formed the centre of the house. A majestic staircase, with an immense mirror on the landing, rising from a bower of growing flowers, led from one to the other. Everywhere were evidences of great wealth and quiet tastes, dark colours and massive Chinese and European furniture.

brightened by mirrors and Bohemian glass chandeliers. Most interesting were the family portraits, all in Parsee costumes, and the splendid silver vases and trophies which had been presented on the occasion of the patriarch's silver wedding, but most charming and interesting of all was the little boy, from whom I parted with regret and whom I hope some day to meet again."

On November 10th we left Bombay at nine in the evening. It was my first experience of Indian travelling, and I found it most agreeable and luxurious. The theory seems to be that one *must be comfortable*, to travel at all.

The trains are very plain, which I consider sensible, but the compartments, though they vary, are all larger than any in Europe. Each one has its own bath-room attached, and each is provided with two or three leather-covered benches on which the traveller lies at ease. No bed-clothes are provided, but everyone carries their own, which is really pleasanter. In a few seconds the faithful Rama had made up our beds and we both spent an excellent night.

Most of the travelling in India is done at night on account of the heat. In the daytime the windows are sheltered by wooden hoods, which are very effective, and Venetian shutters.

When I awoke next morning, I pushed up my shutter, and looked upon the Indian landscape with great delight. Happy indeed was I to have left the steamy heat of Bombay and the black shadow of the Plague, behind. Now we were in a country of cultivated fields, streams, and large spreading trees, which might have been in Europe but for

the people, and the fact that the trees were full of pretty little grey monkeys and green paraqueets.

I will pass lightly over the breakfast with which we were regaled in a so-called "dining car." Everything was cooked in goat's butter, and the black tea had been stewed indefinitely in a large metal boiler. There were several European ladies and two Englishmen, besides ourselves, present at the banquet. They eat every course without remark and drank cup after cup of tea. I love the English for themselves! But experience has forced me to the conclusion that they are responsible for most of the bad cooking in the world.

At half-past one we arrived at "Abu Road," where, leaving our servants to follow, my husband and I got into a tonga and started off for the sacred mountain, Arbuda. Never have I seen such mountains! All sharp-pointed, covered sparsely with green trees, and full of fantastic rocks of volcanic basalt.

The legend is that the inhabitants of this country (which, but for this short isolated range, extends in a limitless plain) begged Shiva to give them a mountain. Thereupon the god whose favour they especially enjoyed, transported hither a spur of the Himalayas, or, as some say, of the mountains of his own paradise, the Kailas. Sacred it has been ever since, primarily to Shiva, but, as things begin but never end in India, later religions have held it sacred also. The Parsees have built a Tower of Silence on its slopes, and the Jains have, with their marvellous temples, crowned its heights.

The tonga is a native vehicle which I now saw for the first time, and I really found it very comfortable, though its motion is not like anything else.

As Stevenson says, "It tangles along," but it does so gaily.

It is a square box with two seats put back to back across it and a square canopy overhead, the whole contrivance being swung very low on two massive wooden wheels. One person may sit beside the driver, but it is far pleasanter on the seat behind, which is easy to get in and out of, which the front one is not, and is more out of the dust. We piled our bags in front accordingly, settled ourselves in the back, and started off on what proved a most interesting drive of an hour and a half. We went very rapidly, with constant relays of horses.

We met many natives going up and down, all thoroughly Indian, men driving wagons drawn by bullock teams, but more often walking beside them, women carrying babies or jars or baskets, but always wearing jewellery of gold or silver and dressed in the splendid costume of Rajputana.

As we reached the top of the mountain and drove along the ridge, palms reappeared and hung over the sacred pools, and springs were now to be seen on all sides. The black rocks were still more fantastic and numerous than before.

We saw two or three attractive bungalows and the palace of the Maharajah of Jaipur, which is perched on a peak of the mountain. Soon after, we arrived at the hotel which consists of several vine-draped bungalows grouped in a hill-side garden, or as it is called here, a "Compound." The host, who is a Parsee, gave us a bungalow to ourselves with a lovely veranda which carried me back to old Virginia shore! Behind the veranda we had a bedroom with nothing in it except iron beds and

a table with a lamp upon it. There was also a dressing-room and an improvised bath-room for each of us. But we did not linger there and started immediately for the Jain temples, in rickshaws.

It was half-past four, the air was fresh and delicious and the way was enchanting! Mountains, pools, palms, houses in gardens and flowers of endless variety charmed our eyes as we passed along.

The Temples which are five in number stand close together in an enclosure surrounded by a high wall. Each one was erected by a different person and at a different time, but with the repetition which characterises Jainism, as well as Buddhism, they have all been placed close together and the group is known as the Dilwarra Temples.

Two of these temples are small and without architectural merit, being roughly built of limestone. The other three are marvels, unsurpassed in the world! I would that I could describe them so that others might see them as they appeared to me. The task is a difficult one, since they are so entirely different from all preconceived ideas and from all other architecture. Fergusson, in his "Indian Architecture," has given a description of them which to me seems quite inadequate. It is not likely that I should be able to do better, so, as with Elephanta, I shall merely offer my impressions.

First of all, I must remind the reader that no matter how well he understands architecture or how much he loves it, the architecture of India, whether Hindu, Jain or Mohammedan will be to him like reading a new book. Architecture with me is a passion. I have studied it *ex amateur* in many countries, but in India I learned it again as though in a new language.

The Indian starting point is different not only from ours, but from all others. The Greeks built their temples on the hill tops. The Romans placed theirs in the Forum or at the intersection of the two great avenues which crossed each Roman town. Narrow streets surrounded the Gothic cathedrals, but still one façade was left open on the market place. In all alike the building was designed to be seen from the outside and its principal conception was that of its exterior. In India no external effect is intended or desired. Temple, palace, mosque and tomb are reverently, lovingly guarded from the outside world. Each and every monument of Indian art was screened behind high walls like a jewel in a casket. The immeasurable truth and value of this idea, which shuts out everything discordant, vulgar or profane, and concentrates the attention of the beholder on the masterpiece alone, I was now to realize for the first time.

Purely Indian in its origin, the Mohammedan conquerors (who had built their mosques in Central Asia, as in Africa and Europe, on the streets and market places, after the manner of the Byzantines) were quick to grasp its artistic superiority. That it has never been copied or even perhaps understood elsewhere, is doubtless due to the fact that the river of conquest has always flowed into, and never out of, India.

Once inside the sacred enclosure, the guardian of the temples led us through a pillared corridor of no great architectural value, and introduced us into the first temple, which was built in the first half of the thirteenth century by two rich and pious brothers, Tejahpala and Vastupala, who also erected the temple at Girmar.



We paused on the threshold—dazzled and finding no words to express our thoughts—The contrast from the mediocrity without to the glory within, was like the Indian sunrise! From the portico in which we found ourselves a covered way conducted to the shrine, a square building with a beehive roof. Around it spread a marble pavement and it was surrounded on all sides by a cloister and a row of cells on the plan of a Buddhist Vihara.

This is its plain and brutal description, such as can be traced in ink on paper. But who shall describe it as it really is? Marble—all marble—not as we know it, but polished and mellowed by the suns of seven centuries to the tint and the softness of ivory. Every inch of it is carved (like an ivory carving) with an inimitable originality, variety, grace and skill, until the whole temple is one amazing piece of shining sculpture—one surpassing work of art!

While we pause thus spell-bound on the threshold and before we enter, let us ask in whose honour these temples were erected and what religion gave this architecture birth?

Jainism is almost unknown outside of India. And no wonder, since it is an absolutely local cult called forth by circumstances, and which makes little appeal to either the head or the heart. Jain comes from Jina “one who has overcome human infirmities and passions.” The sect is contemporaneous with Buddhism, which indicates a certain unrest and dissatisfaction in the Brahmin world in the sixth century before our era.

Buddhism was at first a schism following the Vedanta philosophy and retaining, as it does still,

the laws of Manu. Jainism may be called a heresy, arising like many another because its founders were not satisfied with the gifts of their gods and so set themselves up others in their place. The Jains admit the authority of the Vedas and the existence of the Hindu gods, some of whom they still worship. But they hold them inferior to the Pantheon which they have invented themselves, which consists of the twenty-four Tirthankers.

These Tirthankers are probably deified mortals. They are treated as patron saints, every Jain selecting one to whom he pays a special devotion, as in the case of this temple which is dedicated to Parsavanatha.

The sect which now numbers only fifteen hundred thousand souls was founded by Mahavira, but has divided into two schools. The Digambara (sky-clad) which considers nakedness necessary to salvation, and the Svetambara (white clad) which admit of linen or cotton garments. Either one of which tenets would appear to confine the cult to the Tropics. They carry their faith in reincarnation to the extent of believing that even inorganic matter is animated by the "Eternal Essence," and that a man's soul may pass into a stone. They consider bodily penance necessary to salvation and hold that the most fitting end to a life of asceticism is suicide.

The Jains have gradually gone back to Brahminism and are still doing so. And as they have preserved the rules of caste, when their conversion occurs, the Jain is received back into the caste which his ancestor quitted, it may be a thousand or two thousand years previously.

We entered the courtyard and walked around the shrine which shone in the mellow sunlight like a

block of carved ivory, of the colour of a pale tea rose. On each side is a door of solid silver, exquisitely chased. The door in front is in two leaves, each a mirror in a silver frame. Whence the mirrors came I cannot tell, but though the frames are the original ones, they cannot be older than the sixteenth or seventeenth century. A bronze bell hangs on either side of this door. The mirror doors were opened for us and we dimly saw, by the light of lamps within, a cross-legged image like that of Buddha, a jewelled marble idol, seated in its shrine.

We then walked round the cloister which encloses the courtyard. It consists of fifty-five porticoes behind each of which is a cell. The long marble beams stretching from pillar to pillar are relieved by curious, richly carved struts. The ceiling of each portico is carved with a different design, mythological or floral. Here for the first time I saw the delicate columns with the lotus capitals.

In each cell sits a Tirthanker (the exact reproduction of the one in the shrine) in marble repose, rendered almost lifelike by glittering crystal eyes.

Attached to the temple is an elephant house in which a row of polished marble elephants of various sizes stand side by side. All Indian temples have their "Coach Houses of the Gods." And, in like manner, these elephants, so costly and carved with so much care and skill, are intended for the images of Parsavanatha, (for they are all one and the same) to ride.

The second temple, which dates from the eleventh century is almost exactly similar in design, though bolder in its decoration and a little less rich. Being one of the oldest of the Jain temples which exist,

it shows how complete and perfect their architecture had already become when we first meet it in India. On each of the side doors of this shrine are exquisite marble lotus-flower seats, which are, I believe, quite unique. Here also is an elephant house.

It is marvellous to think that all this is real. But every style of architecture expresses the religion which called it forth. Beautiful as it is, it has no soul, and therefore does not touch the heart.

The third temple is built of grey stone and has no cloisters. It has four porticoes with horizontal domes and rises three stories in height. Though less elaborate and rich it is much nobler in its effect.

We were both enchanted and amazed at all that we had seen and returned to the hotel in great delight. Never shall I forget that evening which we spent sitting on our veranda in the Indian moonlight, while the flowers in the garden gave out their sweetest perfumes. For dinner, we climbed to another bungalow on the top of a hill. From there we saw the whole sweep of the mountain, rising in seven peaks, the highest in the centre, a majestic silhouette against the soft blue sky, in the silver flood of the tropical moonlight. A radiant memory for ever!

Next morning we were waked by the sunrise, and I walked all over the gardens in the delicious morning air before breakfast, which we enjoyed on our veranda. At ten o'clock we started down the mountain in our tonga and this adventure came near to being our last. The road is full of sharp dangerous curves, protected in the worst places by low parapets. Our driver started his horses off so furiously that he lost control of them, and at the first turn we came to a sudden and violent stop.

I did not know what had happened, but my husband dragged me out into the road. Then we saw that the tonga was jammed against the low wall on the edge of the precipice. One horse was lying across it in a tangle of harness and the other hung suspended in the air on the other side. Only the weight of the tonga and its being swung so low had saved us. When I am travelling I always pray to be saved from accident and truly I had escaped this one without even a fright.

Several Indians rushed up from nowhere, as they always do when anything is going on, and we begged them to do all they could to save the horses. And, miraculous as it seems, they succeeded in doing so. The precipice was about thirty feet deep, and by putting ropes under the horse which was dangling in the air, and working them like pulleys from above and below, they managed to lower him on to the shelf of the mountain beneath. The other was then extricated from his uncomfortable position and we had the satisfaction of seeing them both led off to the stable, while others were brought for us to continue our journey.

We had a beautiful drive down the mountain and when we reached Abu Road we found the car which had been ordered for us standing on the side track. We got into it and made a picnic lunch while waiting for our train to pick us up. The journey was hot and the country through which we passed very dry and arid. But when the moonlight came it was all beautiful.

At Ajmere station we saw an old Maharajah with a lot of people seeing him off. He was dressed in a long robe of cloth of silver with a red turban

## • THE SACRED MOUNTAIN

on his head, and as he bade goodbye to his friends he hung a garland of white flowers (handed to him by two servants standing behind him) around the neck of each one. At one o'clock in the morning we arrived at Jaipur and went to the Kaiser-i-Hind, a charming little hotel built in Saracenic style round the courtyard and situated in a lovely garden at some distance outside the town.

# VIII

## "LA VILLE ROSE"

H EAVEN has granted me to see two *paradis* places, Damascus and Jaipur!

The next morning we drove into the rose-coloured city, and truly it surpassed all our expectations. A Hindu city, absolutely unspoiled and apart from the rest of the world.

Jaipur was built in 1728 by the famous Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh, who had the good fortune to survive the successful claimant to the Moghul throne in the struggle for the empire after the death of Aurangzeb. He built it just as it is, enclosed it in double walls and had it all painted rose colour, with floral and geometrical designs in white. Then he moved his people and his court down into it from Amber the old capital in the hills, which was all yellow. The name and in style was Indian Saracen. The city remains, deserted, but still beautiful among its gardens grown wild, like an enclosed city of the "Arabian Nights.")

There are seven gateways in the cretaceous pink walls: through one of these we drove, across an open space, through the gate in the inner wall into the pink city, which is airy and gay, and bright as its own colour.

Three streets, each over a hundred feet broad, divide it into equal parts. Between them run narrow lanes just wide enough for a carriage to get through, but clean and orderly and bordered by the usual oriental shops in which Hindus are busily plying their trades. In the centre of the city is an octagonal open space with a fountain in the middle, all around which the fruit and vegetable market goes on merrily. Here sacred pigeons are fluttering about, reminding one of the pigeons of St. Mark's. Sacred bulls, cows, and calves, all very small and all of a soft grey colour, wander among the people, petted and fed by everybody.

At each corner of this market place are Hindu temples, approached by long flights of pink steps, and there are others on the principal streets. No profane foot may tread those staircases, no profane eye obtain more than an upward glance into those sacred forecourts. No church or mosque or foreign building of any kind is permitted inside the city walls. No European vehicle, except our own, appeared on the streets, but instead Indian bullock-carts, with square peaked and painted wooden canopies, hung on two large heavy wheels and always crowded with people packed together like sardines. Elephants and camels solemnly paraded the thoroughfares, bearing riders or laden with merchandise. We met a band of the servants of the Maharajah carrying sealed silver jars swinging on bamboo poles, containing the water brought from the Ganges, which is the only thing that his Highness drinks. Everything indeed was perfect and nothing jarred in Jaipur.

The women all wear the costume called that of



Rajputana, although it is really Mohammedan and prevails all through the Central Provinces. There can be no doubt of its origin, as it requires cutting and sewing, whilst all the Indian dresses are merely draped. As it was winter here, although to us it seemed like summer, most of the women wore woollen garments, their colours being dull red and green (sometimes orange), and some of them wore jackets reaching below the hips, with embroidered edges and long sleeves. This costume indeed requires a supplement in cool weather, as it leaves much of the body bare. Only a little bodice, four to six inches wide and made of coloured gauze trimmed with gold or silver, holds the bust in place. The full skirt hangs low down around the hips and there is nothing else between. The veil of silk or wool is thrown over the head and either left to flow down behind or caught up under the right arm and tucked into the little bodice. To our Western ideas this dress is hardly modest, but there is no immodesty in it to them, and it is indeed most attractive and perfectly suited to the grace and charm of the Indian women.

Sawai Jai Singh built the city to suit himself, but the interior of the houses was doubtless left to the fancy of the occupants. We visited several of these, as they were occupied by jewellers and enamellers of renown, who, disdaining the banality of shops, receive their customers in rooms on the first or second floor of their private houses. These interiors are all alike, and are built round a courtyard with pillared galleries connecting the rooms on each floor, which was the plan of the old Moorish houses, and one which commends itself to all architects in warm and sunny countries.

The houses which we saw were all very plain with galleries and pillars of white limestone, the larger ones having two courtyards one behind the other.

The most beautiful and noble thing which we saw was the courtyard of the Sanskrit College, which is all in white marble. This is in pure Saracenic style and one of the finest examples which I have ever seen. Murray does not mention it, although he gives a paragraph to the Mayo Hospital and another to the English Church, both of which are outside the town. He also omits to remark on the colour of Jaipur, trusting perhaps to the intelligence of travellers to notice for themselves that the city is *couleur de rose*.

The palace of the Maharajah with its gardens, stables, etc., takes up one-seventh of the ground inside the walls. It also is pink and white. A good deal of marble has been used in its construction and in the inner courtyards there are splendidly chiselled brass gates. But the two audience halls which we saw are tawdry and modern, painted crudely in red, blue and yellow. The Chandra Mahal which forms the centre of the group of buildings and in which the Zenana is lodged, is an imposing structure. It is seven stories high, fluted with bay windows and latticed turrets and glowing rosily in the sunlight. Why do we not paint our cities and palaces pink?

This building contains the Divan-i-Khass which is of white marble and said to be very fine, but this we could not see, as the Maharajah was in residence. As a compensation, however, we were taken all over the gardens which are brilliant and overflowing with tropical vegetation. Marble tanks, fountains

and canals in Saracenic style intersect the luxuriant green at every turn and would have perfected the picture but that alas! they were all without water.

True is the Arabic proverb "Water is the life of all things." The marble gleamed cold and white among the verdure and the flowers, but without the water, it was like the silver behind the mirror, without the glass. Only one little trellised "arbour garden" had its fountain and a tiny cross canal full of the sparkling element, and this was exquisite and all that heart could desire.

There is a little temple of Vishnu in the garden, just a portico with an altar and image of the god. Opposite to it and connected by a flowering alley is a portico of the palace which is the Maharajah's favourite seat.

"Every morning," said our guide (who was a most interesting character himself and a pious Hindu) "his Highness comes here at sunrise, so that the first thing he sees every day is Vishnu!" This is the invariable Hindu expression, he never says "the image," or even "the image of the god," but always "the god!" Nor is it an expression only, it is a firm and unwavering belief.

We speak of "idols" in our vain, presumptuous ignorance of religions other than our own, but the idol, as we conceive it, exists in our own imagination alone. The images of Buddha (and those of the Jains also) are reminders, illustrations and objects of devotion, just as our own holy images of Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin and the saints. They are intended to teach and illumine like ours, which were maintained by Pope Gregory I against the Icono-

clasts, because they were in his own words, "the books of the poor."

In the statues of Buddha this purpose is clear, since the sage is usually depicted in one of three attitudes—teaching with hands folded across his breast, contemplating with hands crossed in his lap, or renouncing the world, the left hand lying in his lap and the right extended in the gesture of giving away.

But with the so-called "idols" of the Hindus, the case is entirely different. The image of the god or goddess, as it comes from the hands of the sculptor is a statue and nothing more. Once it is placed on the altar, however, a most solemn service is performed by the Brahmins before it, in which the deity whom it represents is invoked to descend into it and dwell therein. No doubt disturbs the minds of the devotees as to the fulfilment of this prayer. They believe that the god accedes, animates the stone with his divinity and henceforth it is no image, no reminder, no mere object of devotion, but the god himself. This truth once grasped and understood increases immeasurably the idea of the power and majesty of the Hindu gods, endowing them, as it does, with the attribute of omnipresence.

We also invoke our God to descend upon our altars. We also believe that he comes and rests there in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. Thus the sacred mystery of the Transubstantiation, rejected by modern scientists with their theories of yesterday, presents no difficulty to the Brahmins who have carried the torch of wisdom down through the ages, which was lit at the sunrise of the world.

Just by the temple we met a little son of the

Maharajah. He was a pretty cream-coloured boy of eight with long black eyes, dressed in a black cap and caftan, with hoops of emeralds in his ears. Our guide knew him and told us that his mother was a girl of Jaipur. We stopped and spoke with him and he was very merry and bright.

Then we went to the pool where the sacred alligators live, and sat in a pavilion and watched them being fed. Sacred turtles also appeared and shared in the banquet and sacred hawks joined in as well. The hawks were most interesting and magnificent birds. They caught the meat thrown to them in the air in a most spirited manner and their demeanour was altogether royal.

The Maharajah and his Zenana also come and sit in this pavilion, which by way of change is painted blue, and amuse themselves with this spectacle, so we were very highly favoured.

Our next visit was to the royal observatory. This is an extraordinary place, built, or rather scattered about, in a green field by Sawai Jai Singh. Many of the instruments are of his own invention. This being the only observatory which I have ever seen, and as I am no astronomer, I cannot tell how it differs from others. Great discs of marble, carved with Roman figures and many feet in diameter, are set like sundials in the grass, and narrow marble stairways rise over oriented arcs.

Marble bowls are sunk in the ground into which the astronomer descends to take observations of stars. There are many other curious instruments, none of which I understood. I may, therefore, be wrong in my impressions of the place, but it seemed to me that nothing so cut and dried and modern

as astronomy, was practised here, but rather the romantic science of astrology. My fancy has always painted the observatories of ancient Babylon and Nineveh in the same way.

Last of all we were taken to the royal stables, which are lightly built in Saracenic style round a large sanded courtyard with a pavilion in the centre. Here we had the pleasure of seeing some most beautiful Arab horses being exercised and were also introduced to one of the royal elephants, with whom we were to make a closer acquaintance on the morrow.

As the sun was now setting we returned to the Kaiser-i-Hind. There I entered into trade with various Hindus who are always sitting in the courtyard, and achieved some wonderful bargains in necklaces of matrix turquoise and jade, all of which were Indian pebbles most skilfully dyed. My husband bought me a really superb silver umbrella handle of the workmanship of Kutch Behar.

There were only ten other guests in the hotel, and we all sat round one table for dinner. The meal was very poor, owing to the attempt to make it English. They gave us roast beef, potatoes and cabbage, none of which articles should be eaten or even thought of in India. But the company was agreeable and interesting. Beside me sat an Englishman who had spent his life on a tea plantation. I shall repeat for the benefit of others the advice he gave me, which I have ever since profited by myself.

"Tea," he said, "is perfectly wholesome if drawn for three minutes and then poured off the leaves. But the instant that time has passed the tannin begins to be infused and it becomes injurious."

## IX

### THE PALACE OF AMBER

**N**EXT morning we were up bright and early, not that I claim any merit for that. The Kaiser-i-Hind, like most Indian hotels, has an unpleasant arrangement of windows. There is a row of small ones, without shutters or blinds, above the long windows, which are always furnished with Venetian shutters. And, as the sun rises abruptly every morning about six o'clock, one is waked suddenly from the soundest sleep, and the natural consequence is that one gets up. It was a glorious morning, and although every morning in India is a glorious one (except of course in the rainy season) I never ceased to be grateful for this and always felt like singing the song of Brünnhilde, "Heil dir Sonne, Heil dir Licht!"

We started at eight and drove with our guide towards the old city of Amber. As we approached it our road ran between what had been the country seats of the nobles of Jaipur. On either side were palaces, tombs and wild gardens with kiosks on their walls, all yellow, all Indian Saracenic, all silent and deserted. It is like an enchanted city of the "Arabian Nights."

How I longed to enter those tangled gardens, to

sit in the shady kiosks, and climb to the airy balconies of those palaces ! But alas, time did not serve. We passed through it all as one passes through a beautiful dream. But I can see it still and some day perhaps I shall return.

Amber lies in a basin in the mountains with a wall round the tops of the hills, approached from within by long flights of steps. At the great gate our carriage stopped. The elephant which was to carry us the rest of the way was waiting for us. It was our first elephant ride and I confess I felt a little doubtful about it, but no one is allowed to enter Amber in any other way than on the back of one of the royal elephants, and it proved an interesting experience.

The elephant knelt down, and I was soon mounted on a square platform with a railing at each end which was far from resembling the luxurious howdahs we see in pictures. My husband took his place beside me and an iron rod was passed in front of us from one railing to the other to hold us in, while our feet rested on a hanging step.

Our guide was placed on the other side, the driver scrambled to his place on the neck of the animal, and then the elephant rose. First it got on to its front legs which nearly sent me flying off over its tail, then it brought its hind legs up with a sudden jerk which almost threw us over its head. But, having surmounted these two perils, I gained more confidence.

It was rather rough and tiring as riding, but still we enjoyed it and were glad of the experience. We passed under the gate and through the gardens and soon saw the green lake and, high above it, the Palace of Amber. We descended from our "steed"





I felt it as one feels oneself strangling in a nightmare, with a terror of offending her and calling down her wrath upon me, which brought with it an understanding of the religion of fear. Perhaps there was even something more—the ever recurring question of India: “Have I been here before? Have I worshipped Kali and paid her tribute in some other life?”

It is one of the greatest mysteries of Indian mythology why Shiva, already the husband of Parvati, the goddess of beauty, should have espoused this black, blood-drinking demon, for Kali is also the wife of the Maha Deva. There are many theories on the subject. My own is that Kali was an aboriginal goddess of India, and that the Aryan people, whom we now know as Hindus, found her here when they crossed the Himalayas and descended into the Indian peninsula. My idea is that Shiva in his character of the Destroyer (more logical for him than for Brahma or for Vishnu, the Creator and Preserver) took her to wife as a concession to the aborigines.

The Phœnician and other old Semitic religions delighted in demon gods. The worship of Isis, once so pure and holy, sank under the Roman Empire to a sort of demon cult, so dangerous and obscene that it alone, when all other cults enjoyed toleration, was banished from Rome. There have been demon worshippers in all ages. In mediæval times there were secret chapels in Europe where Baran Satanas was propitiated with human sacrifices and the Black Mass was celebrated. And some of the fashionable cults of to-day, especially those invented by women, embody, thickly or thinly veiled, the same principle.

But a demon god or goddess of any kind is

something foreign to any Aryan religion. The gods of Greece and Rome had their weaknesses and vices, and their vengeance was sometimes aroused against mortals who had knowingly or accidentally offended them, but they were never in any sense the enemies or destroyers of mankind. In Teutonic mythology Loki was a merry devil who played tricks on the gods and occasionally on men, but he was never of sufficient importance to be either propitiated or feared.

Human sacrifices or even the sacrifice of animals are entirely against the teaching of Brahminism which forbids the taking of life. Indeed, at no time could or did a Brahmin preside or assist at a sacrifice of blood. But such sacrifices undoubtedly took place all over India, not only in honour of Kali but when the ceremony of the "Grand Yagnam" was performed, at which the victim though occasionally a man was generally a horse.

To offer human sacrifices was regarded as the exclusive right of princes, the victims being generally prisoners of war. But all these practices, so foreign to the genius of Brahminism, were undoubtedly borrowed from the tribes which the Hindus supplanted and drove into the mountains or the extreme south, whose religion still consists in the worship of Bhootams or demons. Human sacrifices were abolished by the Mohammedan conquerors in the provinces which fell under their sway, but in those which remained Hindu, only after the English occupation.

But I will dwell no longer on the goddess Kali, though we shall meet her again in these pages. Even now, at the distance of thousands of miles, I feel loath to offend her.

We then mounted another staircase and found ourselves in a marble courtyard of great beauty. Now we were really in the palace, the wonderful Palace of Amber, begun by the Rajah Man Singh in 1600. It hangs like a mirage on the side of the mountain, reflected in the lake below. Architecturally, it is second only to Gwalior of all the palaces of India.

Man Singh was the nephew of Rajah Bhagwan Das, the friend of the great Akbar, and the artistic influence of the Moghul Court must have been paramount in Rajputana, for, like the deserted city which surrounds it, Amber is pure Indian Saracenic.

At one side of the marble courtyard stands the Divan-i-Am or Audience Hall. Like all these halls, it is open on three sides, the roof being supported by a double colonnade of pillars with sculptured bases and capitals and scalloped Indian arches between. They are in fact merely porticoes, sometimes built against the palace itself, sometimes standing alone as this one with a screen-like wall behind, in the centre of which was erected the throne of the prince. This building, erected on the edge of the cliff, stands out boldly against the blue Indian sky—bold, but soft as ivory, the sculptured arabesques and Indian lilies seeming as if they would melt like snow beneath the touch. And, like the temples of the Sacred mountain and indeed all these marble miracles of India, it is creamy as ivory in tint and shines like mother-of-pearl.

The Divan is connected with the palace by an exquisite colonnade of lily columns like those at Dilwara. What must it have been when the Rajah and his fan bearers, umbrella carriers, attendants

and guards passed down between these shining lilies to the Divan, filled with resplendent courtiers, and the whole scene glittered with jewels and glowed with rich coloured silks and gold brocades? Different indeed, rich and resplendent and pulsing with warm life, but not more beautiful.

And now as a compensation we had it all to ourselves, for, but for the Hindu guardian and our own Hindu guide, we trod its silent, enchanted halls alone. From this first courtyard we passed through a portal, carved and painted with the delicacy of jeweller's work, into the inner courtyard of the palace. Here to the left, stands the Divan-i-Khass or private Audience Hall, built of ivory marble with square columns with floral capitals and delicate scalloped arches—a marvel of Indian art!

I wish that I could worthily describe the interior of this exquisite building, but I can give only the faintest idea of its beauty. Like every Divan-i-Khass, it consists of a central hall raised on pillars and surrounded by a colonnade, but instead of merely having a wall at the back, there are three rooms, a long narrow one in the centre and a small square one at each end, all lit, or rather illuminated, with windows of jewelled glass. The whole motive of the decoration is floral, that expression of Persian flower worship which pure Saracenic (in its strict prohibition of the reproduction of anything which exists in nature) forbids. It is this glory of flowers which adds the crowning beauty, the perfect charm to Indian Saracenic art. Each wall and every pillar is surrounded by a dado of panels, framed in black and white marble on which Indian lilies are carved in high relief. In the walls there are niches inlaid

with glittering flowers and Persian cups and vases. And all the rest, ceiling and walls, are of stucco, gilded and inlaid with bits of reflecting glass in arabesque designs. Again a dream of the "Arabian Nights," so beautiful, so radiant was it that we could hardly tear ourselves away.

But there was much more to see. They took us down the winding stair to see the baths of white marble, lit to a soft glowing twilight by small windows of coloured glass. Then we mounted to the flat roof of the palace where there was much to see—dormitories, with walls of open-work brick and roofless, where the slaves of the Zenana slept under the night sky and were waked by the sun. Here was the pavilion of the Queen, containing three rooms, one long and narrow and two small and square like those in the Divan-i-Khass. All were of marble carved with Indian lilies, the walls and ceilings composed of mirrors set in gilded stucco, a form of decoration which I wish that I could adequately describe. It is Persian in its origin, and is known by the Persian name of Ardish.

Along the front a marble colonnade opens on to a marble terrace, in the centre of which is a fountain, and the whole pavilion, in its airy lightness, its inimitable grace and beauty, seems the bower of a fairy queen.

Another pavilion of the same size and shape, of marble lightly frescoed, overhangs the outer courtyard. Through the marble lace-work of its screens the queens and their attendants could look down on the Divan-i-Am and see the Maharajah hold his Durbars. These three-roomed pavilions are of pure Saracenic origin and one finds them

varied only by the mihrab, (a square niche at the back) in Morocco and Algiers.

We found another enchanting one in the inner courtyard, with a fountain in the long centre room from which the water ran in a miniature canal through the portico and out into the garden. Jewelled windows softened the sunlight in these shining rooms and the portico was enclosed with marble screens through which the princesses looked into the garden—a pavilion of the Alhambra!

Last of all, we saw the dining-room of the Maharajah, a small apartment the walls of which were entirely covered with curious Indian paintings of cities and holy places. Through the centre of the room flowed a stream of crystal water in a miniature marble canal, and doubtless the Maharajahs sat beside it on cushions of gold brocade and ate their innumerable courses of savoury food, which were placed on a small table (or what we should call a stool) of sandal wood inlaid with ivory, for one must remember that the Maharajah dined alone.

Outside this unique dining-room is a portico enclosed in marble lace-work screens, through which the prince could observe the *va-et-vient* in the outer courtyard, himself unseen.

Intoxicated with beauty and delight, we managed to get down to the Rest House opposite the lower garden gate where we were refreshed with lemonade. And then, though it was half past twelve, an hour at which the English consider it dangerous to be abroad, we mounted our elephant again and braved the Indian sunshine with entire success.

## X

# THE INDIAN WOMAN

**I**T was in this truly and entirely Hindu city, that I made my first acquaintance with the Hindu woman, though I had studied and admired her since the moment of my arrival at Bombay.

I have known many Mohammedan women in the various countries of Islam and count among them dear and most sympathetic friends. Chinese and Japanese and even Korean women, I also know and like. But the Hindu woman, much as I had read and thought about her, was a revelation to me, one of the great revelations that I had in India. So beautiful is she, so graceful, so truly womanly, that it is inexplicable to me why she is so little regarded by those who visit her country, and why she is so little understood.

The prevailing idea of the Hindu woman in Europe and in America is, that she is married as a child, that she invariably survives her husband, and that she is or was, (this point is usually obscure), burnt on his funeral pile. This together with the lugubrious tales of the missionaries, forms, as a rule, the sum of Occidental knowledge on the subject. But that the traveller in India should inquire no further and learn no more is extraordinary, because



the Hindu woman goes about freely and unveiled and affords many opportunities for observation and study.

The Indian Princes have generally adopted the Mohammedan system of Harem, in Hindustani, "Zenana," but as this is with them a matter of expediency only, not one of religion, it may be relaxed at any time. The Rajahs and Maharajahs who visit Europe accompanied by their wives, take them with them everywhere, and allow them a quite Occidental liberty.

Everyone knows that the Hindus are divided into four castes, the Brahmins (priests), Kshattriyas, (nobility or warriors), Vaisyas (traders and farmers), and the Sudras (peasants and labourers). All those outside of these four castes (the descendants of the aborigines of India and all foreigners) are pariahs, literally outcasts. But what many people do not know is that two of these castes, the Kshattriyas and the Vaisyas, are almost extinct. The former, which before the Mohammedan conquest of India, comprised all the reigning families of India, is now reduced to three, those of Rajputana, represented by the Rajahs of Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Udupur. And it is even disputed whether *they* are Kshattriyas. The Vaisyas are still found in small groups in various provinces and are said to be distinguished by their ugliness, while the other Hindus are as a rule handsome.

It may now therefore be roughly considered that the Hindus consist of two castes, the Brahmins and the Sudras. The Brahmins have kept on their original way and are still priests (though they do not all exercise priestly functions) and guardians of

religion, law and learning, but the Sudras have risen from their low estate and climbed to every height except that reserved for the Brahmins. They have become rich as merchants, artisans and farmers and, as the Brahmins are frequently poor, it sometimes happens that rich Sudras have poor Brahmins as servants, though no matter what their relative position, the rules of caste are still rigidly observed.

In a land of many revolutions like India there are many opportunities of advancement. Most of the Sudras have perforce remained in the lower ranks, but some have raised themselves by their talents and ability to the rank of princes, and the thrones left vacant by the extinction of the Kshatriyas are now filled by the descendants of Sudras.

The Hindu women one sees at present are therefore all of these two classes, though a stranger will find it difficult to distinguish between the Hindus and the pariahs. My first Hindu women acquaintances were Sudras. They were the wives and relatives of the two brothers L—— perhaps the richest merchants of Jaipur. They certainly have the most comprehensive business, for they make the finest carpets, the finest brass, copper and silver ware, and the best enamelled work, for which latter Jaipur is famous.

When we arrived at their house, which was a very large one with two courtyards, one behind the other, we were received by the brothers. One of them remained downstairs with my husband in the show-rooms which occupied the lower floor, while the younger conducted me up a steep narrow staircase, built, like the Arab staircases, between walls, to the family apartments. These were on the

third floor of the house, opening on to a stone balcony with a solid ramp, which ran round the four sides of the court, topping the colonnade below.

I entered a room where there were a few chairs, a table and some Indian paintings in black frames on the walls. Three women received me, the wife of the younger brother, her sister, and the widow of an uncle. There were also two pretty little boys, who were, I learned, the sons of the two latter. The women were all dressed in figured cottons and wrapped in veils of white or black with embroidered borders. The wife wore a gold medallion on her forehead, a solid gold ring round her neck, and several heavy spiked and balled gold bracelets, with anklets of massive silver. She was young and pretty and so were the others, who also wore jewels, though not quite so many. Nearly all the women in India are pretty and most of the women one sees are young. I often wonder where the old women keep themselves, or if it is that they remain a long time young.

The husband stood outside on the balcony and translated for us when we got into difficulties, (though I found with them, as I have always found with Oriental women, that we understood each other wonderfully well without the aid of a common language. He remained outside, because it is not etiquette for a Hindu husband and wife to speak to each other in the presence of strangers.

I admired the little boys and the widow managed to tell me that hers was her only child. Then I admired their jewellery, and they held out their arms and threw back their veils that I might see it better. I said to them that I wished I could wear such beautiful clothes as theirs and that we wore very ugly

things in Europe. They sympathized with me in the most heartfelt manner about this, and the wife opened a cupboard in the wall and showed me her "best dresses." Beautiful they were indeed. Among other things I remember a red veil embroidered with coloured flowers and having a border of gold, and three bodices, tiny things, just large enough to hold the bust, made of embroidered gauze. One was yellow embroidered in red and silver, one black, with red and gold, one pink, with green and gold.

Then the elder brother's wife came in, wrapped in a veil of yellow silk, with even more bracelets and anklets than the other women. She held out her hand to me, but I was afraid to take it, not wishing to pollute her. She was Sudra, but I was well aware that I was a pariah! (If a Hindu of any caste touches a pariah or eats with him, or eats anything that he has cooked, he is defiled, which means a temporary loss of caste. This can only be remedied by a religious ceremony, for which recourse must be had to a Brahmin, and is therefore a serious matter.) But she continued to hold out her hand and, fearing to be rude, I called to her brother-in-law to know what I should do. He authorized me not only to take her hand but to shake hands with all the others, assuring me that they would be pleased. I did so, but I knew, as well as they did, what it meant.

The incident well illustrates the exquisite courtesy of the Hindus who to do honour to a guest, push hospitality to the point of serious self-sacrifice.

Three women servants then appeared, who seemed very much to enjoy the novelty of my visit. I spoke to them all and it was very pleasing to see the terms



those which were conquered by the Mohammedans. And that change of fashion affected the dress of women only and not their coiffure, which dates from time immemorial.

The hair of the Hindus is heavy, straight and jet black. The women part theirs in the middle, and drawing it smoothly behind their ears, twist it into a graceful knot on the back of their necks. This arrangement perfectly suits their fine and regular features, and gives the universal effect of an oval face.

Most Hindu women are very pleasing to look at, many are beautiful. Their features are nearly always good, especially their noses, which are clear-cut, straight and "just what a nose should be." Their eyes are long, soft and black; their lips ripe and red, and their expression pensive and sweet. Their modesty and dignity are unfailing, and even the casual stranger is struck by the respect with which they are universally treated in public. This is the same in all Oriental countries, where no man ever stares at, or comments on, or offers any impertinence to a woman. In Mohammedan countries, where every woman is veiled and muffled beyond recognition, this is less surprising, though the Moslems extend the same courtesy to unveiled European women. But in India, where the women not only show their faces, but much of their figures as well, it really is remarkable. The figure of the Hindu woman is, indeed, her greatest beauty, and it is so little concealed that there is no reason for evasion or doubt. All the women seem to have good, one might often say perfect figures. They are all straight, all hold themselves admirably, and whether

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

they are slender or of voluptuously rounded proportions, they are always models of ease and grace.

Such was the figure of the Aryan woman! Her gift from nature, which presumably reached its highest perfection in the Greek woman, but which the Roman, the Celtic and the Teutonic woman also possessed, the figure which has made them all immortal. That figure would still be ours, had it not been distorted and spoiled by the false, artificial tastes of centuries, by the corsets which have compressed and deformed it, and the heels which have destroyed its equilibrium. Much has been said lately in defence of the present immodest and absurd style of dress, about the beauty and truth of displaying the "human form divine." But alas, it is no longer the human form which is displayed but a distorted counterfeit, the hips crushed, the centre lifted above the waist (giving the body a barrel shape), the feet crippled by tight shoes, and the whole figure thrown out of balance by the hideous and abnormal heels.

The Hindu woman walks flat on the ground, bare footed, or with sandals. She has never been strangled by a collar, blinded by a dotted veil, or compressed and distorted by any unnatural physical restriction. She is as God made her, and I think all who see her will agree that we cannot improve on the work of God.

The Hindu woman is one of the few women of the world who is always *en toilette*. Slouchiness and slovenliness are unknown to her, and this is a trait which many of her Occidental sisters would do well to copy. It is a pose in England to be shabby in the country, no matter how smart one is in town. I have often been struck by the incongruity of the

effect when visiting in beautiful old country houses where everything was artistic, rich and rare, to be received by ladies, often of high rank, dressed in rough shapeless coats and skirts of weather-beaten tweed, flannel blouses and heavy boots. Truly they do themselves injustice by affecting this carelessness and unattractive mannishness in dress, and never more so than when they stand beside the portraits of their ancestresses.

I may be old-fashioned, but I think a lady should be dressed like a lady, and not like a rough man any more than like a demi-mondaine. Many Russian women sit in the house all day in loose flannel wrappers, doubtless because they are uncomfortable in their corsets. This also is a very uninviting custom. The Italian women, as a rule, dress themselves only to go out, and the same may be said of many others who aim at elegance and chic, because to be dressed means such discomfort and often suffering. They do not realize, alas, that these self-inflicted tortures are inscribed in lines of pain on their faces, and that they thus defeat their own ends.

But the Indian woman enjoys perfect ease in her costume, and no matter how poor she may be, she is always artistically draped, and one finds her doing her housework with all her jewellery on. This might be going too far in the other direction, but that her natural dignity and serenity never fail her, and she is always mistress of the situation in which she finds herself.

Every woman in India has jewellery, whether of pearls and gems, of gold and silver, or of brass and glass. Even as a child she begins to wear it and, as amongst the ancient Egyptians, it is considered



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

of much more importance than clothes. Children of the poorer people generally go naked until they are six or seven years old, and often those of rich people follow the same custom. One frequently sees pretty little girls quite nude, wearing necklaces and bracelets and anklets, and if they are the children of wealthy parents, loaded with valuable jewellery. The bracelets and anklets, indeed, are often put on when they are little, so that they may grow up to them and that later they may not come off.

There are different costumes in India, two of which I have already described—that of Bombay in the west, and that of Rajputana and the Central Provinces. This latter is the dress introduced by Mohammedans. In the Central Provinces I have seen it varied, a tight pair of red trousers taking the place of the full skirt. When these are worn the veil is fuller, supplying the effect of drapery. But as we see it at present, the costume is incomplete: formerly the trousers were covered by a full skirt of gauze embroidered in gold and silver.

In Bengal, dress, like everything else, is less pleasing and attractive than in other parts of India. There, everyone, male or female, wears only white, the women's dress consists of two separate pieces of linen, one draped about them like a low-necked frock held with a cord about their waists, and the other thrown over their heads as a veil.

The most perfect costume is found in Southern India, and it is also worn by the Hindu women in Burmah and Ceylon. This consists of one piece of stuff, either a red figured cotton or a gorgeous silk, crimson, purple or dark blue, interwoven with gold. I have more often seen silk worn than cotton, and

when one wears only one garment, and that being hand made, lasts for a long time, it is easier to have it of rich material. This garment is wrapped round the hips reaching only to the knees. The free end is brought up over the bust, carried over the left shoulder, and then tucked in at the waist behind. The women who wear this costume have no veils and no head-dress of any kind. With their bare arms and legs and beautifully formed backs and shoulders, with their jewels and rich silks shimmering with gold, they appear in their full perfection.

It is said that Southern India is the *real* India, and a southern woman who walks about unveiled in the sun is the most *real* woman of India. I should say here that some of the women of the South are fairer than those of the North, and many of the Brahmin women are no darker than Spanish or Italian women. Fairness is also appreciated, and some women rub their faces with a solution of saffron, which gives them a pale yellow tint, which is not, however, so attractive as their natural complexion.

Hindu women, of course, have no buttons, hooks or even pins. Their garment is either draped around them and tucked into its own folds, or else a strip of cotton is tied round their waists and the drapery depends for its support on that. Neither arrangement would last in Western countries for half-an-hour, but though the women walk about a great deal and are free and active in their movements, I have never seen one with her clothing disarranged. In the same way, their veils remain as they are first placed on their heads, while ours would soon be on the ground. We can only explain this

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

like many other things in the East as the result of the natural and inimitable repose of the Orient.

The Indian woman, whether rich or poor, leads a very simple life. Her education is of the simplest kind. Those who are poor used all to spin, but since that occupation has been taken from them they now need only learn how to pound and boil rice. Of course they do their housework, but that, in a house devoid of furniture, amounts to very little. If they are well enough off they have beds strung with cords on which rests the bedding, and they have brass cooking utensils. If not, they sleep on mats and use only earthenware vessels. But whatever they have, they are always washing and cleaning it. Every day they wash their floors, and they are always bathing and washing their clothes in the rivers and tanks.

Only the sacred courtesans and dancing girls, who are set apart and brought up for these professions, are taught to read, sing and dance. Respectable women often sing over their work or at weddings or other family festivities, but even if by some chance they have learned to read they would be ashamed to own it and the daughter of Herodias is the only Oriental lady on record who ever danced. As among the Greeks, accomplishments are reserved entirely for the courtesans.

But the Indian woman is very quick and bright, and her natural intelligence and unspoiled instinct help her to achieve much. It is a precept universally recognized among the Hindus that women should always be kept in a state of dependence and subjection, first under their parents and then under their husbands and mothers-in-law. Under no circumstances should

## THE INDIAN WOMAN

they be allowed to become their own mistresses. Even a widow must be guided and governed by her sons. This is an excellent rule, observed also by the Greeks and the Romans as long as they were in their prime, and one which might be introduced with great advantage in America. But women are much alike all the world over, and there are many houses in India, as elsewhere, where in her own way the woman rules.

All Hindu women, with the exception of those reserved for the service of the temple and those who become bayaderes, are married. Men who have renounced the world and chosen to lead a life of contemplation may take vows of celibacy, but this privilege is not extended to women, whose mission in life is to bear children and to minister to the pleasures and wants of man. An old established theory, indeed, since Eve was created for Adam !

## XI

# HINDU MARRIAGE

“**T**O a Hindu, marriage is the most important and engrossing act of his life. An unmarried man is looked upon as having no social status and as being an almost useless member of society.”

The same sentiment prevailed among the ancient Greeks, and also among the Romans. A Hindu who becomes a widower is, for the same reason, obliged to re-marry, and does so as speedily as possible. As we have seen, those who embrace the life of contemplation and become Gurus and Sannyasis, are excused from the duty of matrimony. But for all others, marriage is the rule and every man is under the obligation of discharging “his debt to his ancestors.” Unlike most Oriental countries, monogamy prevails in India and also in Burmah and Ceylon.

“Polygamy is tolerated amongst persons of high rank, such as rajahs, princes, and statesmen. Kings are allowed five legitimate wives, but never more. Nevertheless this plurality of wives among the great is looked upon as an infraction of law and custom, in fact as an abuse.”

The gods, with the exception of Shiva, had only one wife, Brahma only Sarasvati, Vishnu only

Lakshmi, and some authorities contend that Parvati was the only real wife of Shiva, Kali being conceived by them as a mere personification of the power of destruction.

Men of inferior rank sometimes keep mistresses, but always in a separate place, and if possible, without the knowledge of their wives. The only case in which a man may take a second wife is when after a number of years his wife remains barren, or has only borne him daughters; he is then not considered to have paid his debt to his ancestors. Even then he can only marry again with the consent of his first wife, who always remains his chief wife and retains all her prerogatives. In most cases however the husband prefers to adopt an heir.

Among the Brahmins it is the custom for girls to be married quite young, at five, seven or nine years of age, while the bridegroom is usually about sixteen. The Sudras sometimes follow the same customs, but more often they wait to marry their daughters till they are of a marriageable age. The reason for marrying girls thus early is twofold—that there may be no doubt as to their being in a state of virginity, and because a girl or woman who dies married, though it be only in name, dies under the happiest conditions and is certain of a joyful reincarnation.

The great drawback is that the bride, who is given back to her parents after the ceremony and remains with them till she attains the marriageable age, is often left a widow before that time arrives. This is especially the case when she has been espoused by an old Brahmin, for no matter at what advanced age a Brahmin becomes a widower, custom bids

him to remarry. Then, as widows are not permitted to contract a second marriage, the unfortunate girl is obliged to remain a widow for the rest of her life. The British Government has done its best to prevent child marriages for this reason, and to obtain the remarriage of virgin widows, but so far without success. Though a widow be young, beautiful and rich, no Brahmin, no matter how old and poor, would espouse her, and though a few Sudra widows have ventured on second marriages, the result to them and their husbands has been the loss of caste.

Even when the girl is marriageable at the time of her wedding, the young people are not supposed to choose each other, the marriage being arranged by the two families. The family of the boy look most for purity of caste and that of the girl for fortune and the character of the mother-in-law, to whose control their daughter will be submitted. But, as Indian parents are very devoted to their children, we must believe that love also sometimes plays a part in Hindu marriages.

A Sanskrit verse says : The girl courts beauty, the mother riches, the father knowledge, relatives good lineage, other people sumptuous marriage feasts.

Rich persons sometimes refuse to allow the bridegroom to give their daughter a dowry, and insist on paying all the expenses of the wedding, giving all the jewels and ornaments themselves, which it is customary for the bride to receive, and even making handsome presents to the bridegroom and his family ; but this is rare. Sometimes the two families share the expenses, but the most usual method is for the bridegroom or his family to bear all the expenses of the wedding and the jewels, and also to give the

bride's parents a sum of money in return for their daughter, the amount of which is laid down by caste custom.

This has given rise to much criticism on the part of the English, who talk indignantly about the selling of daughters and the buying of wives. But I must say that, for my part, I find it more complimentary to a woman for her husband to give money for her than to accept her in consideration of her dowry, as the custom is in most European countries.

Everything that is given to the Indian bride by her own or her husband's family is hers, and she retains it when she becomes a widow. When she attains a marriageable age, her parents celebrate the event with an entertainment, after which she is conducted with much pomp to the house of her husband and the marriage is consummated. The months generally chosen for weddings are March, April, May and June, especially the two latter, though in a case of urgency they may be celebrated in November or February. Most likely the reason why these four months were selected as the most auspicious for marriage is that during them, agricultural work is suspended on account of the great heat, and because the crops, having been harvested, help to defray the wedding expenses. In the same way the peasants of Northern Europe celebrate their weddings when they are at leisure during the winter.

The marriage ceremonies and festivities occupy eight days, the first three of which are only preparatory. To describe all these things in detail would occupy several chapters, so we must content ourselves with a slight sketch. The first thing to be done is to



erect a Pandal (pavilion) in the courtyard of the house if there is room, and if not, outside. In this an image of the god Vigneshwara is installed. The sacrifice known as Puja is offered to him and he is invoked and entreated to ward off any misfortune which might happen during the celebration of the marriage. The Brahmin Purohita (officiating priest) then takes his place in the Pandal, provided with some "Darhba" grass, and some small pieces of wood from the seven sacred trees.

The sacrifice to the household gods comes next, and all the men and women present anoint their heads with oil. Such, doubtless, were the most ancient marriage ceremonies of the Greeks, modified as time went on. The ceremonies of the Hindus have never been modified and therefore in them the student of the past may recover the primeval customs of the Aryan race.

Many and varied sacrifices and ceremonies follow. On the second day two women carry the consecrated fire, singing the while, into the Pandal and place it in the centre of the dais, which is raised within and on which all the important ceremonies of the marriage take place. After this, each of the women receives a present of a new piece of silk or cotton cloth. Presents are also given to the nine Brahmins who have performed the sacrifices to the nine planets, and, as on the first evening and every evening of the eight, the ceremony ends with a feast.

On the third day a new cloth or carpet is spread over the dais in the Pandal, and for the first time the bride and bridegroom are brought into it and seated upon it. The married women then surround them, anoint their heads with oil, rub them with

saffron, and finally array them in their wedding garments. After this everyone joins in burning incense and the ceremonies end with a feast.

It should be said that the Pandal and the doors of the house itself, are hung with garlands of flowers and leaves, and everyone present is arrayed in all the splendours of dress and jewels at his or her command.

On the fourth day the wedding really begins. This is called "Muhurta," and is the most important of all. The house and the Pandal are purified and decorated with fresh flowers. When the guests have assembled the Purohita performs the ceremony of the "Sam Kalpa" and invokes all the gods, beginning with Brahma and, going down the list, winds up with the seven great penitents and the nine planets, begging them to remain under the Pandal and preside over the marriage. The ancestors are then invoked and offerings made to them, during which ceremony the bride and bridegroom are seated in the Pandal with their parents seated beside them and their faces towards the east.

The consecrated fire is then brought in again and after endless sacrifices and ceremonies the bridegroom and bride are dressed in their most sumptuous attire. The bridegroom then performs the "Sam Kalpa," after which he announces that he is going to make a pilgrimage to Benares and starts off, accompanied by all the married women who are present singing the chorus. After passing the limits of the village he turns to the east, but there he is met by the father of the bride who tells him that he has a young daughter whom he will give to him in marriage. The young man accepts the proposal with joy and returns to the Pandal, where the married women

perform the ceremony of the "Arati" (a charm against the evil eye) for him and the bride.

Among the innumerable ceremonies which follow, the Tali, a little ornament of gold which all married women wear around their necks, is passed round among the company to be blessed; the blessing of those who have been married a long time is especially sought. The bridegroom then fastens it round the neck of his bride with a yellow cord twisted with flowers, tying it with a triple knot, while at the same time he is reciting "Mantrams," (the most sacred prayers). The husband then takes his wife's hand and leads her three times round the sacred fire.

After this, which is the real primeval marriage ceremony, the young couple stand each in a basket of bamboo and shower each other with rice until they are tired. More ceremonies follow, and the marriage rite is completed by the husband and wife, still seated in the Pandal, eating their supper together from one banana leaf. This is the only occasion on which a woman may eat with her husband. On all others she must serve him first, and take her meal afterwards.

The menu of the marriage feasts is always the same :

Boiled rice, with melted butter and spiced sauce :  
Vegetables of various kinds.

Fritters, puddings, curdled milk, salt pickles,  
fruits.

Four dishes of various spices mixed with rice,  
(whence doubtless comes the idea of the  
English savoury.)

A drink composed of lime juice, spices and  
water.

All these things are served in metal dishes, banana leaves being used as plates and cups.

For four more days the sacrifices and ceremonies continue, interspersed with innocent games in which the participants take great pleasure, and the festival is wound up by a torch light procession, in which the newly married couple are carried through the streets in a palanquin adorned with flowers and jewels, the latter, not only their own but lent by all their relatives and friends.

The wedding festivities of the old Germans and Scandinavians lasted for twelve days and May was their most fortunate month. This was a commemoration of the marriage of Odin and Frigga, which took place during the first twelve days of May (for which reason the month was sacred to the goddess). All these customs of the Aryan peoples, modified by climates and conditions so different, may be traced to the same source, to that long distant time which has no past. For the Aryan was never a savage, but was always skilled in agriculture, in the arts of spinning and weaving and working metals, and, more than all, possessed a rich and finished language and an intensely poetical religion full of deep thought.

Marriage is almost as indissoluble among the Hindus as it is in the Catholic Church. A woman never obtains a divorce from her husband, and a man may only do so on the ground of infidelity. This is very rare, for Hindu women are very chaste, but even when it occurs, it is generally concealed and denied by the husband and his relatives, who prefer to pardon the offence rather than incur a scandal which will reflect discredit upon the whole caste. Especially is this true among the Brahmins.

It is often said that a man's mother seeks to make trouble between her son and his wife, fearing that the influence of the young woman may become greater than her own. If any serious disagreement occurs, the wife returns to her own family and remains with them until matters are arranged, when her mother-in-law must come for her and take her back to her husband. Also for the birth of their children young women always return to their own families and remain there until they are quite well again, when their husbands must come themselves and take them home.

There is no country in the world where children are more loved and praised than in India. A numerous offspring is the universal desire, and no matter how poor a Hindu is, he never complains that his family is too large, but always prays to the gods for more. Women who have no children or not as many as they desire, offer sacrifices and make pilgrimages for the same object. And the love and care of the parents is not wasted, for though the children are often spoilt and undutiful in their early years, they always take care of their parents when they are old. Truly we have many things to learn from this oldest branch of our race!

And now we come to the famous Suttee, which, like most things Oriental, is generally misunderstood in the Occident. The greatest misfortune that can befall a Hindu woman is to become a widow. For her there is no prospect of a second marriage, as we have already seen. Though she retains her own property, she may only wear certain jewels, and she cannot attend weddings (the great joy of all Hindus), because her presence there would be

unlucky. She is in mourning for the rest of her life; she is obliged to renounce colours and dress only in white. Condemned to this sad and hopeless existence, it is but natural that some young widows should succumb to temptation and either accept a lover or run away and become bayaderes. But the natural virtue of Hindu women is so great and so ingrained that the percentage is very small.

As in everything else in India, one must remember that religion is the mainspring of life, and that the Hindu widow is sustained by the hope that her chastity and self-denial will be rewarded by a brighter and happier reincarnation.

It may be unnecessary to state that the Suttee has been abolished, but just possibly not. There are negroes in Florida and Louisiana who are still unaware that slavery has been abolished, and in the mountains of Tennessee some people are, it is said, at every Presidential election voting still for Andrew Jackson.

The general idea of Suttee entertained in the West is that it was the universal and obligatory custom. This is entirely false. Suttee was never practised, except by a small minority, and it was always voluntary.

The custom is said to have been prompted by jealousy and to have originated in the Kshattriyas caste. It was, indeed, principally practised among the Rajahs and Maharajahs. But its origin is far older than that, and goes back, like most Indian customs, to the cradle of the Aryan race. In the Teutonic "Helden Sagen" there are frequent instances of wives who refused to survive their husbands, and who, stabbing themselves beside their funeral pyres, were burned with them, to the universal

admiration of beholders. Brünnhilde, it will be remembered, mounted the pyre of Siegfried and, refusing to stab herself, held Grane, Siegfried's horse, by the bridle, and they all went up to Valhalla together. Even the goddess Nana gave up her life at the funeral of her husband, Balder, preferring to be with him in hell, rather than in heaven without him.

Such sentiments were supposed to animate the Hindu widow also. But in her case there were other considerations. The Teutonic widow was free to marry again, and usually availed herself of the privilege, but the Hindu widow must have contrasted the lonely hopeless life before her with the alternative of dying with the greatest honour amid the applause of the multitude! And what was to her the *certainty* that, if she thus sacrificed herself for the sake of her husband, he would meet her again on the other side of the fire and lead her, without further reincarnation, to Paradise.

This custom indeed is nowhere prescribed or even approved in the Vedas, and for a woman who had young children Suttee was always forbidden. Suttee was always practised most along the banks of the Ganges and in Bengal. In the south it was never popular, and it has been officially stated that in the Madras Presidency, which numbers at least thirty million inhabitants, not thirty Suttees occurred in a year.

After the English acquired power in India, English Protestant missionaries appeared on the scene, in 1810. Their horror was naturally aroused against these sacrifices, and they set to work to have them abolished. But, being unacquainted with the

character of the Hindus and using harsh and violent measures, it happened, as it often does with well-intentioned but unqualified persons of their profession, that they did more harm than good. The Suttees, fanned by opposition, increased, and in 1817 there were seven hundred and six of them in Bengal alone.

The Government then interfered and passed a law that before Suttee could take place, the widow must be brought before a British magistrate, who should question her as to whether her resolution was entirely voluntary and seek to dissuade her from her purpose. But, as a rule, his efforts were in vain, for, as the Government doubtless did not know, when a widow had once announced her intention of being burnt with her husband, her decision was considered irrevocable.

The procedure at a Suttee was as follows :

The corpse of the husband was dressed in rich attire, covered with jewels and garlands of flowers, and placed in a sitting posture on the funeral car, which headed the procession. The widow, robed in magnificent draperies and loaded with jewels came next, carried in a decorated palanquin, Brahmins, relatives and friends, made up the cortège. All along the route the spectators thronged about the widow to do her homage, while the air was rent with cries of joy and admiration of her heroism. Arrived at the funeral pyre (which, in the case of princes, was sometimes made of sandal-wood, and was always strewn with spices and aromatics) the husband's corpse was laid upon it, and the wife, when she had been led by the Brahmins three times round it, took her place beside him. Melted butter was then





token—a custom full of poetry and feeling, like many others which have come down to us from the morning of the Aryan race.

It is whispered that Suttce sometimes takes place even now in the sacred enclosures of the great temples of the south. But the custom was officially abolished during the Administration of Lord William Bentinck (1825-1835) at the instance of the great Rajah, Ram Mohun Roy.

## XII

# THE MOSLEM CONQUERORS OF INDIA

FROM Jaipur to Delhi we travelled one long bright day, (all days are bright in India indeed) from noon till ten at night. I lay most of the time on the divan of our compartment in the softened light which filtered through the Venetian blinds. And as I watched the gleaming lines of gold against the dusky background, my thoughts wandered with ever new delight among the lights and shadows of Oriental history.

This Delhi and this Agra towards which we were hastening, were Indian of India in the long, long past and from the dawn of Time.

Agra indeed belongs to the memories of Krishna and the Mahabarata, and Delhi owns the oldest monument of India, the "Arm of Victory" of Raja Dhava. But, since the year one thousand of our era, these cities with the provinces which they command have fallen to Islam, conqueror after conqueror of Afghan, Tartar, Persian and Turkish blood coming down across the Himalayas, irresistible as the mountain torrents, to carve themselves new kingdoms with their swords.

The dynasties which they founded, now, alas no more, but great and glorious in their day, are known

to the western world under the names of "Pathan" and "Moghul."

Will it be superfluous to refer to their history? To recall these princes who vie in the dramatic interest of their lives, their loves, their exploits, with the most famous heroes of romance? Truly I think they are but little known in the Occident, which is all the stranger as they stand out against the chaotic background of Hindu-Indian history like figures of gold inlaid in black steel.

Most people know something of the great Akbar, for instance. Everyone *knows*, or thinks he knows of Noor Mahal, because Tom Moore has revealed her to the West. But most believe the Taj to be her tomb, and imagine that its architect was an Italian. And when one is confronted with the errors into which even British Viceroys have fallen, through ignorance of Indian history, it would seem that a few words on the subject would not be in vain. But I must tell it as I have learned it from the Oriental historians. The natural and supernatural as they are always fused together in the crucibles of the East, not sifted, strained and sterilized down to the banality of the standards of the twentieth century.

Unlike the French invaders of Italy, who were led down into that fair country by envy, malice and more than all by that idleness for which the devil loves to find an occupation, the Mohammedan conquerors of India were forced across the Himalayas by the hand of destiny.

And again, unlike the French, who finding Italy rich and happy and at the height of perfection in all the arts, ruthlessly destroyed and left her a helpless



bling what was left of his army, crossed the Himalayas and descended like a thunderbolt into Hindustan.

The Hindus, though for centuries they had spent most of their time in fighting among themselves were no match for the hardy Afghans and Tartars. Mahmud defeated the Rajputs, who had assembled to meet and repel him, in one great battle at Peshawur in the year 1001, and made himself master of North-Western India.

Some years later Mahmud recovered his kingdom of Ghazni and, with the true love of the Afghan for his mountains, left his rich conquests and went back to die and sleep his last sleep at home.

But from that time the Northern invasions went on and at the end of the twelfth century another Mohammed came down from Ghor into India to remain. In 1193 Delhi was captured by his lieutenant Kutub-ed-din who had been a Turkish slave. Northern India was gradually conquered by Mohammed Ghori and on his death without a direct heir in 1219 Kutub-ed-din, the former slave, proclaimed himself Emperor of India!

The dynasty thus founded, which is known as the "Slave Dynasty," reigned in Delhi for three hundred years and gradually extended its dominions until the great Ala-ed-din conquered Southern India and made the Mohammedan Empire of the Peninsula complete (1255 to 1515).

Seventy-three years later, in 1398, Delhi was taken and sacked by the great Timour known to the West as Tamerlane.

From this time the Pathan power declined and when a century later still, Timour's descendants came to reclaim the conquests of their great ancestor,

Delhi was the capital only of a comparatively small kingdom.

The Pathans are still a magnificent race, and one which makes itself felt all over India. But they are more distinguished by physical force than by intellect and for the last four centuries they have been cast into the shade and almost forgotten in the far greater splendour and renown of their kindred the Moghuls. Indeed the Pathans, great as they were in the arms and arts, may be said to form the *preface* of the *Book* of the Moghul Empire, whose dazzling pages we now hope to turn.

Few royal races may be compared with that of the Moghuls, and no dynasty in the records of history has produced six such great princes in succession as Babar, Humayun, Akbar, Jehanghir, Shah Jehan and Aurangzib !

Let us turn back a moment to their great ancestor Timour, one of the most wonderful personalities, not merely in the history of the Orient, but in that of the world. Born as the son and heir of the Khan of Jagatai, a small and almost unknown principality of central Asia, it was the ambition of the young Timour to conquer the world and to live in history. When he succeeded to his father, he would not allow himself to be crowned in the usual way, but insisted on crowning himself. How far his ambition was satisfied will be shown by the fact that the diadem of Jagatai was the first of thirty-seven crowns which he afterwards placed on his own head !

Truly it may be said that one succeeds where many fail. But God helps those who help themselves, and it is difficult to point out another man

who possessed the courage, ability, determination and resource with the ambition of Timour.

Babar himself, one of the most striking figures in Oriental history, was the sixth in descent from Timour. For five generations the numerous descendants of the great Tartar had been fighting among themselves for the fragments of his empire, until among them no real power remained. Babar found himself at the age of twelve (in 1494) Khan of the little kingdom of Farghana, now the province of Kokand.

On his mother's side he was descended from Jenghiz Khan, but in spite of his high descent and apparent advantages he was in a very precarious and unenviable position, for all of his uncles were eager to despoil him of his crown, and his only real friends were his mother and a very clever and courageous grandmother.

The adventures of Babar are quite equal to those of any prince of the "Arabian Nights," and we have an unusually good opportunity of knowing them, for not only have they been preserved and related by various Oriental historians, but he has told them himself in his most charming "Memories."

A true Tartar! Not the one we think of galloping across the plains of Hungary and besieging Augsburg and Paris, nourished on raw horseflesh and striking his enemies with a whip of leather thongs tipped with iron balls. But the brave, romantic poetical Tartar of Central Asia, fearless in war but loving his gardens and orchards in time of peace and preparing in his life-time one garden more beautiful than all where he should sleep in death.

For three years after his accession Babar managed,



with the assistance of his grandmother, to sustain himself on the throne of Farghana. Then acting on a sudden inspiration he made a bold dash with his little army for the old capital of Timour, Imperial Samarkand—and took it! Such an exploit for a boy of fifteen foreshadowed a great destiny, but the conquest of Samarkand was a matter of sentiment rather than ambition with him. He wanted the capital of his great ancestor whom he passionately admired, and he has charmingly described in his memoirs his own delight in the great city, telling how with boyish glee he paced the ramparts, wandered from palace to palace and revelled in the gardens of fruit and flowers!

Babar indeed possessed a great love of nature and was blessed with a most bright and happy disposition, two qualities, which as it has been well said, “brought back into Indian art the spirit of joyousness, which it had not known since the days of Buddhism.” But Babar had a still greater gift, than either of these—his unwavering faith in God!

Only three months after he had taken Samarkand most of his troops deserted, not having found the booty that they sought, and went over to his enemies. His own capital, Andijan, was besieged, and Babar thinking only of his mother and grandmother, whom he had left there, and leaving only a handful of men to guard Samarkand, flew to their rescue. It was too late! Andijan had fallen before he arrived and almost at the same moment Samarkand was retaken by one of his rivals. This double turn of Fortune’s wheel against him caused most of his followers to desert, and he found himself with only two hundred men still faithful and nothing left of his kingdom but the little town of Khojend.

For the only time in his life he gave way to grief and admits that he wept much: though a hero he was only in his sixteenth year. But soon another turn of fortune's wheel restored to him his mother and grandmother, and a little later his kingdom of Farghana. A second time he surprised and captured Samarkand; again only with a handful of men, in the year 1500. This time he held it for a year, until it was besieged by his rival Shaibani when being unable to hold it, he was forced to fly under cover of night. Once more a fugitive, this time he did not weep. He had learned that all things are in the hands of God.

The next morning he rode a race with two of his followers, and reaching a village where they had "nice fat flesh, bread of fine flour, well baked, and sweet melons and excellent grapes in great abundance" he made a good breakfast and declared that he had "never felt so keenly the blessings of peace and plenty."

He then took refuge in the mountains and interested himself in the life of the mountaineers. The Head-man of the village in which he established himself had a wonderful old mother, a hundred and eleven years old, with whom it was Babar's delight to converse.

This old lady had had a relative who had accompanied Timour in his campaign to India. She entertained the young prince with stories of the adventures of his great ancestor, and alluring accounts of that wonderful country which he was destined to make his own.

\* \* \* \* \*

Babar, like most heroes of romance, had two wicked uncles; these were named Mahmoud and

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

Ahmed. Deceived into thinking them his friends, he made an alliance with them against Tambal, a powerful noble who had revolted against him and put his brother Jehangir on the throne of Farghana. But when it came to an encounter with the rebels, the wicked uncles deserted Babar and left him at the mercy of Tambal. Forced to fly for his life he was pursued and overtaken by two of Tambal's horsemen, but then, though two to one they dared not attack him on account of his great strength and courage. Babar entered a garden by the roadside and they entered with him to wait until they were reinforced by their comrades. Feeling thoroughly worn out and seeing no chance to escape he resigned himself to what seemed for the moment, to be his destiny.

He writes thus in his "Memories": "There was a stream in the garden and there I made my ablutions and recited a prayer. Then surrendering myself to meditation, I was about to ask God for his compassion when sleep closed my eyes. I saw in a dream Khavaja Yakub, the son of Khavaja Yahya and grandson of his eminence, Khavaja Obaid-Allah (a famous saint of Samarkand), with a numerous escort mounted on grey horses come before me and say:

"Do not be anxious, the Khavaja has sent me to tell you that he will support you and seat you on the throne of sovereignty. Whenever a difficulty occurs to you, remember to beg his help and he will at once respond to your appeal, and victory and triumph will straightaway lean to your side."

"I awoke with easy heart at the very moment when Tambal's soldiers were plotting some trick

to seize and throttle me. Hearing them discussing it, I said to them, ‘All you say is very well, but I shall be curious to see which of you dares to approach me?’

“As I spoke the tramp of a number of horses was heard outside the garden wall. Yusef, the constable, exclaimed, ‘If we had taken you and brought you to Tambal our affairs would have prospered much thereby, as it is, he has sent a large troop to seize you, the noise you hear is the tramp of horses on your track.’

“At this very moment the horsemen, who had not at first found the gate of the garden, made a breach in the crumbling wall through which they entered. I saw they were Kutluk Mohammed Barlas and Babai Pargari, two of my most devoted followers, with ten or twenty other persons. When they came near to my person, they threw themselves off their horses, fell at my feet, and overwhelmed me with marks of their affection!

“Amazed at this apparition, I felt that God had restored me to life. I called to them at once. ‘Seize the traitors and bring them to me bound hand and foot!’ Then, turning to my rescuers, I said, ‘whence come you? Who told you what was happening.’

“Kutluk answered, ‘After I found myself separated from you in the sudden flight from Akhsi I reached Andijan at the very moment when the Khans were making their entry. There I saw in a dream Khavaja Obaid-Allah who said:—

“‘Padisha Babar is at this instant in a village called Karman, fly thither and bring him back with you, for the throne is his of right.’

“Rejoicing at this dream, I related it to the big

Khan and the little Khan. Three days we have been marching, and thanks be to God for bringing about this meeting!"

After this adventure Babar unwisely rejoined his "wicked uncles," "the big and little Khans" (who of course protested their innocence). But all three were utterly defeated by Shaibani at the battle of Akshi in 1503. Once more forced into exile Babar, then twenty-one years of age, resolved to renounce Farghana for ever and (as Mahmoud of Ghazni had done before him) to seek another kingdom.

Joined by his two brothers Jehanghir and Nasir and by an army composed of several wandering tribes of different extraction, he fell on Kabul like a bolt from the blue and took it, as six years before he had taken Samarkand. But unlike Samarkand, Kabul and Afghanistan remained to Babar and his descendants. And, since it alone was on their own side of the Himalayas of all their empire, and its people were of their own religion and race, it remained their favourite province and was held by their affection as the brightest jewel of the Indian crown.

Once settled in a beautiful and fertile kingdom, Babar *set himself to cultivate the arts of peace*, and here his intense love of nature appears on every page of his "Memories." He describes the climate, the fruits, flowers, birds and beasts in minute detail as well as the human inhabitants, speaks with admiration of beautiful landscapes and relates how he planted fruit trees and cultivated flowers. This love of nature and horticulture proved a blessing in India, for wherever Babar went in his new empire, his first care was to dig wells and plant orchards and gardens, some of which still remain as the Ram

Bagh and the Zobra Bagh near Agra. He also planned the great road which his successors completed, a broad avenue shaded by magnificent trees (along which I have had the pleasure of driving myself) which extends four hundred miles from Agra to Kabul.

Babar made one more unsuccessful attempt in 1506 to crush his old enemy, Shaibani. But four years later the latter was defeated and slain by Ishmail, Shah of Persia, who conferred Samarkand on Babar. For the third time Babar held, and the third time (after eight months) lost the city of Timour. Thence on he renounced his dream of reconstructing the empire of his ancestor and turned his eyes towards India.

But not thoughtlessly or without due preparation did Babar attempt this great adventure. Wise by nature as he was brave, he was also learned in the history and the wisdom of the past: for he had eaten of "The tree of knowledge whose roots," as the Arab proverb says, "are at Mecca and Medina while the fruit is at Samarkand and Bokhara."

For nine years he drilled and trained his Afghan subjects for the great undertaking and only in 1519 did he make his first descent into India. This first expedition may be called a rehearsal of the drama he intended to play; a reconnaissance in fact to obtain practical knowledge of the peninsula of Hindustan. Four more times did Babar descend from the mountains. The fourth time with his little army of only ten thousand men he defeated the hosts of Ibrahim Lodi, the last Pathan king of Delhi, in the great battle of Panipat in 1526.

Ibrahim Lodi with fifteen thousand of his soldiers

## *INDIAN DREAM LANDS*

were left dead on the field and Babar, who had taken Samarkand at the age of fifteen was now at the age of forty-four, after striking this single blow, Emperor of India ! He had fulfilled his destiny.

## XIII

# THE GREAT MOGHULS

**E**MPEROR OF INDIA with that great and wonderful country unrolled before him like a map, Babar was obliged to fight two more supplementary battles to insure his sovereignty. One was fought in 1527 near Agra with the chief of the Rajputs, Raja Sanga of Chitore, the other in 1529 near Buxar with the Afghans who had settled in Bengal. After this all opposition was ended, and he was as he has written himself—"Master and conqueror of the mighty empire of Hindustan."

Babar had fixed his capital at Agra and during these three years he had been busy with the works which we have mentioned; of irrigation and horticulture. Love inspired him. Not the love of nature only, but the love of every country which ever fell under his sway. Working thus with heart as well as brain he soon changed the desolate plains which surrounded the city into luxuriant orchards and gardens. But all too soon the gardening was ended, for only for four years was Babar to rule in India.

But not for exile did he leave it as he had left Farghana and Samarkand, but to go home beyond the mountains to sleep while the world shall last,



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

in the best beloved of all his gardens which he had long since chosen for his tomb, "in the sweetest spot of the neighbourhood." Babar's death was as noble and dramatic as his life. The climate of India had told somewhat on his health. He complains of the dust and the heat and the strong winds which swept along the Jumna, but adds with his accustomed cheerfulness, "baths were the means of removing all three inconveniences." In 1530, while he was planting roses and narcissi in his new gardens around Agra, the news came that Humayun, the eldest and best beloved of his sons, had been taken ill with fever at his country estate at Sambhal. Overcome with consternation and grief Babar had his son brought by boat to Agra, where to his despair the royal physicians declared that the case was hopeless.

Someone then suggested that "in such circumstances the Almighty sometimes deigned to accept the thing most valued by one friend in exchange for the life of another," Babar exclaimed that of all things his life was the dearest to Humayun, as Humayun's was to him." *He would sacrifice his life for the life of his son!* His friends implored him instead to give the great diamond of Gwalior, said to be the most valuable stone on earth.

This diamond, which now appears for the first time in history and which has had a strange and varied career of its own was the famous Koh-i-noor. Babar has given its story himself in his memoirs as follows: After the battle of Panipat, Babar sent Humayun forward to occupy Agra. The young prince did so without opposition, and found there the family of the Rajah of Gwalior, who had been slain at Panipat. He treated them with the greatest

kindness and consideration and they in token of their gratitude and homage presented him with a "peskesh" consisting of a quantity of jewels, amongst which was the great diamond of Sultan Ala-ed-din, the Pathan conqueror of Southern India, the Koh-i-noor (mountain of light).

But Babar declared that no diamond could be sufficient ransom for his son's life and persisted in offering his own. Solemnly he walked around his son's bed, as in a religious ceremony, and then retired to devote himself to prayer. Soon after he was heard to exclaim, "I have borne it away! I have borne it away!"

Humayun immediately began to recover and Babar to sink. After commending Humayun to the protection of his friends, and his younger sons to the kindness and brotherly love of Humayun, so passed away the first of the Great Moghuls of India.

Humayun thus restored to life was faithful to the trust imposed in him by his father. He had most of the good qualities of Babar, but unfortunately for himself he had not inherited his genius as a leader of men.

Lacking this, his best efforts to rule wisely and well and to hold the Indian Empire together, entirely failed. Nine years after his accession a revolution occurred headed by Shere Khan Sur, an Afghan, who had submitted to Babar, but who saw his opportunity to throw off the yoke of his son. A great battle was fought at Kanuj and Humayun was completely defeated. He found himself, as his father had so often, a fugitive with a handful of men and eventually he was driven not only out of Hindustan, but even out of Afghanistan. He took refuge with

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

the Shah of Persia, and Shere Khan Sur reigned in his stead at Agra for five years, at the end of which he died, under the title of Shere Shah.

His son, Selim Shah, succeeded him and reigned for seven years, but on his death a struggle between his relatives for the succession gave Humayun the opportunity of regaining the Indian throne.

In the meantime Humayun after having tasted all the bitter fruits of exile had recovered Kabul with the aid of a Persian army. He now marched down into India where he was received and re-established as Emperor and Great Moghul in 1555.

But some are born for happiness and success and some for the reverse. A few months after his restoration Humayun fell down the stairs of his palace in Delhi and was killed. Humayun was not carried back to Kabul, but a Tartar garden was made for him in India between Delhi and Kutab. There in a glorious tomb raised to him by his son, the great Akbar, he rests. Tranquil and undisturbed in death, as he was not permitted to rest in life. The son of a great father and the father of a great son he is known chiefly or perhaps entirely to the Western world by his mausoleum, which was the model of the Taj Mahal.

While Humayun was a fugitive, hunted from place to place in that empire, which had been his own, a star arose in that darkest hour which was to light the Eastern world. Akbar the Great was born in the temporary refuge of Amarkot on the edge of the deserts of Marwar in the year 1543. It was the custom to make presents to the courtiers on the birth of a prince, but Humayun was so poor that on the birth of his son and heir he had nothing left

to give but a pot of musk. But with the courage and cheerfulness of his race he broke the pot and distributed it among his faithful followers, adding the wish, which showed that like his father he never lost hope, and which was destined to be brilliantly fulfilled: "That his son's fame might fill the world like that perfume."

The early years of Akbar were thus passed in exile, which gave him the hard training of Adversity, so powerful an aid to the development of a strong character. Akbar was thirteen years old when he succeeded to the throne, almost the same age at which Babar had become king. Like Babar he found himself surrounded by difficulties, but these difficulties were soon overcome, for happily for himself he had inherited not only the courage and resource, but the genius of Babar.

At the moment of Humayun's death, Akbar was in Sind in the charge of Bairam Khan, the greatest general and, as it proved, the ablest statesman of the realm. At the same time the news came of a revolution in Kabul and as it was evident that the Hindu princes would seize this opportunity to recover the sovereignty the young Emperor found himself between two fires.

With rare discernment Akbar realized that he was too young to cope with the situation and only sought to choose among many his best adviser. His choice was Bairam, a decision worthy of Solomon! Following implicitly his counsel, he ignored the revolution in Kabul and hastened towards Delhi to meet Himu, a Hindu general who had assumed the name of Raja Bikram with the hope of restoring the old Hindu dynasty.

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

On the plains of Panipat, where Babar had won the crown of India thirty years before, the Tartar and the Hindu armies met. History repeated herself, as she has done so often. Akbar under the guidance of Bairam, completely defeated Himu and re-conquered once and for ever his Indian Empire. After this, things were soon set in order and Kabul returned to her allegiance. Akbar, realizing that he had need of the experience of Bairam, remained under his direction till he was eighteen years old. Although his noble nature revolted against some of the methods of his vizier, who with all his talents was unscrupulous and cruel, he bided his time and devoted himself to learning the great and complex lesson of ruling his empire.

In 1560 he took over the administration into his own hands, whereupon Bairam, who had acquired a taste for power, revolted against his master. His rebellion however was soon put down and himself taken prisoner, when Akbar with his usual magnanimity and grandeur of character, remembering his services and forgetting his treason, pardoned him and sent him off, with a magnificent present, on a pilgrimage to Mecca. But not thus easily was he to escape his punishment. The knife of an Afghan whom he had wronged put an end to his chequered career before he had had time to leave India.

Akbar has left no memoirs for the good reason that he could neither read nor write, which is strange, considering the literary attainments of others of his family, but most likely the poverty and exile of his father during his childhood was the cause. He was nevertheless a great and comprehensive student and master of four languages beside his own, Hindu,

## THE GREAT MOGHULS

Persian, Arabic and Greek. He possessed a large and most valuable library of books in all these languages, everyone of which, as his faithful friend and biographer, Abul Fazl relates: "was read through to him from beginning to end."

Abul Fazl was Akbar's grand vizier and one of his greatest admirers. He has left a most interesting and comprehensive account of Akbar's life and reign, of his policy, habits and character, in his book the "Akbar-Nama." From this it is evident, a fact to which indeed there are many other witnesses, that Akbar ruled his great empire himself. No detail of State affairs was too small for his personal attention. Ability and integrity were the only passports to his favour, while bigotry and injustice were anathema to him.

Akbar chose for his ministers, and his example has been followed by most of India's Mohammedan princes, both Moslems and Hindus, the best and most able of each. With their assistance he reformed the administration of justice, keeping the supreme control in his own hands, abolished excessive taxes, improved the land revenue and established religious toleration for all creeds.

Fond, like his grandfather, of horticulture, he carried on the improvements in that direction of Babar, and imported and domesticated many kinds of fruits and flowers in India. An ideal autocrat, the success of his efforts and the happiness which he gave to his empire remind one of the golden age bestowed on Italy by the great Theodoric and the "twelve happy years of Ireland" under Bryan Boru. A lesson as to which form of government is the best might be learned with profit by those

countries of Europe and alas ! even of Asia, which are at this moment oppressed by false and degenerate democracies.

Abul Fazl not wishing to criticize, has touched but lightly on Akbar's religious latitude. But another of his biographers, Badayuni, though a fanatical Moslem himself, has treated the subject with great insight and skill. He says :—

“From his earliest childhood to his manhood and from manhood to old age, his Majesty has passed through the most varied phases, and through all sorts of religious practices and sectarian beliefs, and has collected everything which people can find in books, with a talent of selection peculiar to him, and a spirit of inquiry opposed to every (Islamite) principle.

“Thus a faith based on some elementary principles traced itself on the mirror of his heart, and as the result of all the influences which were brought to bear on his Majesty, there grew gradually as the outline on a stone, the conviction in his heart that there were wise men in all religions and abstemious thinkers and men endowed with miraculous powers among all nations.

“If some true knowledge were thus everywhere to be found why should truth be confined to one religion, or to a creed like Islam, which was comparatively new and scarcely a thousand years old, why should one sect assert what another denies, and why should one claim a preference without having superiority conferred upon itself ?”

Akbar was not satisfied with knowledge derived from books alone. He sought to understand each religion from living testimony. Secretly at first

he consulted the Brahmins. It is related that in his desire not to offend his co-religionists he had them brought in boats on the Jumna under the walls of the palace of Agra, from which they were pulled up in baskets to a tower where he received them. All this took place in the dead of night.

Sheikh Selim Chisti, a holy Moslem, who lived in a cave near Fathepur Sikri, and of whom we shall hear again, exercised a paramount influence over him and held him to the faith of Islam for a time. But after the Sheikh's death Akbar pursued his religious researches openly and built an Ibadat Khana, (Hall of Worship) for the general discussion of philosophy and religion. There Akbar received representatives of all the religions, not of India only or of the East, but of the known world.

Mohammedans, Brahmins, Buddhists, Parsees and Jains, Jews and Christians, with all of whom he conversed and listened attentively to the arguments which each advanced in support of his faith. He invited Jesuits from Goa and allowed them to build a church at Agra, and though they did not make an official convert of the great Moghul, they exerted so great an influence over his mind that Badayuni asserts that "His Majesty firmly believed in the truth of the Christian religion." Once, as Badayuni relates, Akbar entered the church alone, when bowing three times before the high altar he knelt and offered a fervent prayer.

To me it seems evident that Akbar believed in all religions, the natural result of having studied them in a sincere search after truth.

But as others had seldom the time or opportunity to follow his example, he proposed to himself the



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

task of fusing all religions into one. The end of his studies was the proclamation of a universal and state religion called the Din-i-ilahi (Divine Faith). This was a monotheism, in which God was recognised as the maker of the universe and the only source of power. The doctrine of the resurrection common to Parsees, Moslems, Jews and Christians was discarded in favour of that of the transmigration of souls. The prayers of Islam were replaced by others of a more general character, while the ritual was largely borrowed from that of the Hindus. The priesthood was abolished and Akbar himself was declared to be the Vicegerent of God on earth. With the spirit of toleration which had characterized the great Moghul throughout no one was forced to accept his religion. Many did so out of policy, but it took no root anywhere and on his death it passed away with him and was forgotten.

Akbar had learned many things about religion but one thing he had singularly failed to see—that a religion cannot be made. Religions come about in two ways. Slowly and gradually by natural growth, as all pantheisms have come, or suddenly by revelation. Religions of the first class have neither beginning nor end. They live on long after other faiths have apparently taken their place, for, not the Buddhists only still worship the old gods, but we and even the Moslems unconsciously cling to old rites and even old beliefs, which have come down to us through countless ancestors from the Primeval Religion.

For revealed religions there is but one test of their truth, for there are and have been many false prophets,—and that is the test of *Time*.

The Din-i-ilahi was neither natural nor revealed, hence its failure. A failure destined for some so-called religions now in vogue. Doubtless it was a political as much as a religious move, by which Akbar, always working for one end, hoped to unite the diverse elements of his empire. But in vain! Religion, at least in the Orient, is stronger than race, and each prefers his own. Akbar himself proved the rule, and on his death-bed renounced his own invention and once more professed the creed of Islam.

Like most Oriental sovereigns of the past, Akbar dispensed justice himself and sat daily in the seat of judgment to hear all who chose to appeal to him. There is a wonderful tenacity in the traditions of the Tartars. In Hungary, the Magyar nobles still have their parks and gardens, sometimes miles away from their castles and manor houses, in the most lovely spots that can be found, and till the Revolution the Emperor of Austria, as King of Hungary, sat in the throne room of the palace in Buda one day in every week when he was there, to dispense justice to all who sought it, as did the Tartar Khans.

Like Haroun er-Raschid also, Akbar sometimes put on disguises and wandered among his people to inform himself of the real condition of affairs and to learn how his officials were fulfilling their trust. All in all, no ruler of India was ever so successful in everything or so beloved. He is still one of the greatest heroes of Hindustan and his mighty deeds, his justice, his wisdom and his wit "still live in song and story."

Akbar was the first of the Moghuls to ally himself with the Rajputs by marriage, taking for his chief



In each of her palaces she had a Hindu temple, built for her by Akbar himself and always dedicated to Shiva, in which she pursued her devotion to her chosen patron among her own gods.

Abul Fazl and other historians were thus able to tell us her story in which she is best known by her third name bestowed on her after the birth of Jehanghir, "Moti Mahal" (Pearl of the Palace.)

The first children of Akbar and Mariam Zamani were twins, but they died in infancy and Akbar overcome with grief at their loss, for they were his only children, sought consolation from the holy hermit, Sheikh Selim Chisti. This eminent person lived in a cave near the village of Sikri and though a religious recluse he, like most of the Hindu Sannyassis, possessed a wife and children. He advised the Emperor to bring his consort and his court to Sikri, and Akbar without hesitation followed his advice, and built the city of Fathepur.

To be an Emperor was a pleasanter rôle to play in those days than it is now. Akbar willed a city and as if by magic a city rose at his command. Fathepur Sikri, which though now deserted and its gardens lapsed back into the desert, is still one of the finest monuments of Indian art.

Soon after the visit of Akbar to Selim Chisti, a miracle occurred. The youngest child of the hermit, an infant only six months old, suddenly spoke, addressing his father as follows:—"The Emperor will never have an heir unless some other child will give its life in exchange. I will give mine, and willingly I die that the prince may be born." Having spoken these words, the infant immediately died,

and nine months afterwards the Empress gave birth to a son.

The joy and gratitude of Akbar were boundless. Before the confinement of his consort he had her taken to the cave of the hermit and there the heir of India was born.

At Fathepur in the apartments of Akbar, there still exists a fresco, in the Persian style, of an angel appearing at the mouth of a cavern with an infant in his arms, doubtless a poetical conception of the birth of Jehanghir.

The new-born prince received the name of Selim by which he was known until his accession to the throne when he assumed that of Jehanghir.

The court remained at Fathepur for seventeen years, during which the city increased in size and splendour. At the end of that time Sheikh Selim Chisti complained to the Emperor that he was too much disturbed by the noise and movement of the neighbourhood and said that either he or the Emperor must find a new home.

"Then," replied Akbar, "let it be your servant, I pray," and with the same readiness with which he had come, he went away again, removing his court to Agra and leaving the splendid city he had created to go back to the desert and the jungle. A pity! a great pity, and one would have thought it easier for the hermit to have found another cave. But nothing was too good for Selim Chisti and when at last he died, Akbar built him a marvellous tomb in the courtyard of the great Mosque of Sikri where he still lies in state.

Akbar was one of the greatest and most intelligent patrons of the Arts who have ever lived. With the

same loving care with which Babar dug wells and planted gardens he cultivated and brought to perfection the arts of India. At the same time he introduced into the peninsula the arts of Persia which in the next and succeeding reign were to blend with those of India and result in the Indian Saracenic.

In all this he broke away from the limits which Islam has set for art, added to the arabesque, geometrical form of decoration, human figures, animals and flowers, and became the especial patron of the art of painting. Such decorations indeed have always been employed in Persia, but Persia is not orthodox, the Persians belonging to the Schism of the Shias.

Abul Fazl thus explains the Emperor's position in regard to painting: "His Majesty from his earliest youth has shown a great predilection for the art and gives it every encouragement, as he looks upon it as a means both of study and amusement."

Akbar's own explanation, as given is still better: "Bigoted followers of the law are hostile to the art of painting, but their eyes now see the truth. It appears to me as if a painter had a peculiar means of recognising God, for a painter in sketching anything that has life and in drawing its limbs, must feel that he cannot bestow personality upon his work and is thus forced to think of God, the giver of life, and will thus increase his knowledge."

Akbar was also devoted to poetry and collected about him poets and minstrels who basked in the sun of his favour. Birbal, a Hindu minstrel, who came to court in the beginning of his reign was made Hindu poet-laureate and then raised to the rank of Rajah. He was one of Akbar's chosen friends and advisers and perhaps in return for the benefits received

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

he became a convert to the Din-i-ilahi. Akbar's court must have been indeed a paradise for artists and men of letters, and one that lasted a long time, for his reign extended over half a century.

The great Emperor died at Agra on the 13th day of October 1605 (two years after the accession of James I of England) and was buried at Sikandra, in a tomb worthy even of his greatness, which he had begun himself and which was completed by Jehanghir.

The modern city of Agra on the right bank of the Jumna was founded by Akbar, who built the Agra fort and part of the palace which it contains. This, with Fathepur Sikri, ranks among the most famous architectural wonders in India. They are the best monuments and the best witnesses to the greatness of Akbar.

## XIV

# THE IMPERIAL ROMANCE

**S**ELIM inherited the strong character and some of the ability and talents of his father, but he was fierce, passionate and cruel. One must remember that he was half a Hindu, and, without disparagement to the latter race, no cross is apt to be as noble as the thoroughbred.

Moti Mahal, for all we know of her, was as amiable as she was beautiful, but the violent traits of her son were doubtless inherited from his long line of Rajput ancestors, nursed for so many centuries in the insidious ease of absolute and undisputed power. Like them also he had been born to a throne on which he remained firmly seated all his life—thus lacking the stimulus which his Tartar ancestors had found in conquering and holding their crowns. He was not however lacking in ambition, as is shown by the name which he assumed on his accession, Noor-ed-Din Jehanghir, ("Light of Religion and Lord of the World").

In early youth Prince Selim was married to a Rajput princess, daughter of the Rajah of Jodhpur. He had also a Persian wife, but both of these were merely unions of expediency and far from satisfying his passionate nature. Selim obeyed the will and





her up again they resumed their journey, fondly hoping a great destiny for her.

The little one seemed indeed to be what we should call a mascot, for from that moment the fortunes of her family were in the ascendant. On reaching the first village at the foot of the mountains they learned to their great joy that Akbar and his court were in Cashmere.

Itimad-ed-Dowlah hastened to the Imperial camp and applied for a position among the secretaries of the Emperor. His petition was granted and, as the court was about to return to Agra he made the request that his wife and child might travel with the Imperial harem. This too was granted and thus the infant, born on the hillside and abandoned there, entered India in the Imperial cortège.

Itimad-ed-Dowlah's ability and qualifications were undoubtedly great. He rose rapidly in the service of Akbar till he became Lord High Treasurer. Meanwhile the little daughter whom God had willed to live, grew up a most beautiful and intellectual young girl. So beautiful was she indeed that while still a rosebud the fame of her beauty was spread abroad and, doubtless, at this time she received the name under which the world still knows her, of Noor Mahal. The immortal Tom Moore has translated it "Light of the Harem," but this it is not; nor does "Mahal" mean exactly palace, as is generally accepted. The real meaning of the word is "Royal Residence" in the sense in which the Germans use "Residenz," and the word which expresses it nearly in English is "Capital."

In the Orient, as is truly said, *L'amour s'attrappe par l'oreille*. The hand of Noor Mahal was sought

by many suitors and Itimad-ed-Dowlah betrothed her to a nobleman of Burdwan, Shere Afsan, known as the "Lion Killer."

Owing to her youth, she remained for awhile at home. But "accidents will happen in the best regulated families." One day, as Prince Selim was riding through the streets of Agra, he met Noor Mahal, who was being carried along in an open palanquin. At that critical moment her veil became untied and fell off. Noor Mahal was revealed in all her beauty and the Indian god of Love shot an arrow into Selim's heart, which made a wound so deep that never did it heal.

The young Prince hastening home begged his father to obtain for him the daughter of Itimad-ed-Dowlah for his bride. But Akbar, who was above all things just, on finding that she was already betrothed, refused to interfere. Selim was forced to submit to his father's decision, and Noor Mahal was married to Shere Afsan and carried off to Burdwan.

Agra had lost its "Light."

Three or four years elapsed after the marriage of Noor Mahal, and then Akbar died and Selim succeeded to the throne. Immediately afterwards he caused Shere Afsan to be accused of treason and had him tried, condemned and executed. Love, the motive of so many crimes, was the only excuse of Jehangir for this deed. He was an ardent Mussulman, but at this time his religion was rather one of faith than works. And—he had an illustrious prototype who had sinned in the same manner and for the same cause, and who had been forgiven!

Having disposed of the "Lion Killer," Jehangir

had his widow brought to Agra where he confided her to the care of his mother Moti Mahal.

Noor Mahal had loved her husband and she resented his death and remained true to his memory.

For four years she remained in the palace of the Dowager Empress, a sort of State prisoner, for her family were all living in Agra and no doubt she would rather have been with them. During this time the Emperor paid her the most respectful and devoted attentions and laid the crown of India at her feet. For four years she repulsed all his advances and resisted his love, but then—she was a woman, and love conquers all things—so she consented to become his wife.

Strong of character, whole hearted, and true was Noor Mahal, and her hand once granted she gave her heart with it, and made Jehangir a most loving and devoted wife. He, in turn, appreciated as much as he loved her.

During the rest of his life never once did his devotion waver. His heart remained as true to her "as the needle is true to the pole." Valuing her intelligence and judgment, he consulted her in all affairs of State. On the Imperial coinage her name appeared with his, with the additional inscription, "Gold has acquired a new value since it bore the name of Noor Jehan"—for he had changed her name, which he considered insufficient to express her qualities, to that of Noor Jehan "Light of the World!"

Her softening influence soon made itself felt on his character: we hear no more after his marriage of violence or cruelty, and she even succeeded in

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

controlling the intemperance into which he had fallen in those years of waiting.

Many writers who had lived at or visited the Court of Agra, have related instances of the love and happiness of the Imperial pair. Never would the Emperor be without his Noor Jehan. She accompanied him on all his journeys, and every evening when they were in Agra he took her for a drive in a bullock cart, permitting the presence of no attendant and driving her himself.

Of course the family of the Empress came in for their share of honour. Itimad-ed-Dowlah, the Persian, who had crossed the Himalayas on foot to seek his fortune, had certainly found it, for he was made Grand Vizier.

Europeans had begun to come to the Moghul Court in the reign of Akbar. They flocked there in the reign of Jehangir, who encouraged them in every way, admitted them to his palace and sometimes invited them to his midnight suppers, at which the wine flowed freely, in spite of the precepts of the Koran, or even the influence of Noor Jehan.

Meanwhile the Empress occupied herself with good works and artistic interests. Her charity was overflowing, but the favourite objects of her benevolence were orphan girls, of whom she provided marriage portions from her private purse for no less than five hundred.

She was a great patroness of the Arts and an artist herself, for it is said that she designed the decoration of her own apartments in the Samman Burj—the most exquisite part of all the wonderful palace of Agra, which we know as the Jasmine Tower.

Jehangir continued the patronage of the Arts

which Akbar had founded and welcomed artists to his court. But with his reign pure Indian architecture ended, and Persian influence called in by Noor Jehan became paramount. A circumstance which however we cannot regret, for noble and beautiful as is the Indian architecture of the time of Akbar, the Persian architects and their successors produced something more glorious and perfect still, the Indian Saracenic !

In the first days of their marriage Jehangir and Noor Jehan occupied a suite of rooms extending along the right side of the Anguri Bagh (the inner garden) and ending in the red sandstone tower. The decoration of these apartments has been almost entirely destroyed, but what remains is purely Persian. But during this time the Emperor was building for his beloved the bower of a fairy queen, which she thence occupied whenever she was in Agra, the incomparable Jasmine Tower !

There is a little country house at Sikandra, a kiosk of the "Arabian Nights," deserted now in its wild tangled garden, where Jehangir and Noor Jehan used to come and spend long languorous summer days, which shows us still her love of Persian art. But its highest and noblest expression is found in the exquisite tomb which she erected to her father and mother. A work of love and art so beautiful that it is sometimes weighed in the balance with the Taj.

Jehangir and Noor Jehan had no children, but he had four sons by his two other wives. An Oriental woman must, if possible, have a child and where nature has denied her offspring she resorts to adoption. Among Mohammedans where there is a plurality of wives, the rivalry which is supposed to exist among

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

them (though often it has no existence at all) is softened by the interest which they take in each other's children.

These are brought up to call all the wives of their father "Mother," and when a wife has no children of her own she generally fixes her affection on the child of one of her dourras (fellow-wives). And sometimes where a wife has lost an only child, another more fortunate sends her a new-born infant to take its place, which is thenceforth considered as her child.

Noor Jehan selected as her favourite the youngest of her step-sons, Prince Khurram, the son of the Persian wife and probably the one who most resembled Jehangir. This Prince inherited amongst other things the violent temper of his father. Indeed he once openly revolted against his father and with his turbulent followers sacked Agra outside the fort, but Jehangir remembering his own youthful violence and his father's magnanimity, pardoned and restored him to his favour.

Noor Jehan bestowed on him her niece, the daughter of her brother, Asaf Khan, a beautiful girl named Arjumand Banu, and there can be no doubt that it was she who induced Jehangir to pass over his three other sons and fix the succession on Khurram.

During part of his reign Jehangir held his court at Kabul or Lahore and it was in the latter city that he died in 1627. He was buried at Shadara, near-by, in the splendid tomb erected by Noor Jehan, who though she survived him by twenty-one years, withdrew from taking any part in the affairs of State and lived always in Lahore. There she also died and was buried by his side at Shadara.

It is nearly three centuries since then. 'The Thirty Years' War' was ended in the year in which Noor Jehan rejoined her royal lover in the other world, and what innumerable events have been crowded into the two hundred and seventy-five years between then and now! But there are many souvenirs of that Imperial romance which bring it nearer. The Jasmine Tower is just as beautiful and fresh as it was then. The green paraqueets still chatter in the trees around it as they did when Jehangir and Noor Jehan sat in its airy cupola hand in hand. And a Queen of England wears the Koh-i-noor worn then by the Empress Noor Jehan!

Jewels have always played a part in the history of Timour and his descendants. Diamonds were little valued outside of India before the sixteenth century and it would seem that rubies were the favourite jewels of Timour. On one occasion when he was resting after his conquests, in Samarkand, he made a great marriage feast for three of his grandsons and three of his granddaughters. At the end of the festivities the six young couples were conducted into a magnificent saloon, around which their apartments opened, where gold cups full of pearls and rubies were emptied on their heads. This was an ancient custom which we find described in the "Shahnamh" where Sindocht, Queen of Kabul used this means to induce Sam, the Prince of Sejestan, to consent to the marriage of his son Zal with her daughter Rudabe. The Queen, who was very beautiful, entered the presence of the Prince of Sejestan accompanied by a troop of young and lovely slaves, who carried golden cups out of which they strewed pearls and rubies.



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

Nothing has a beginning in the East and nothing an end. I have seen the same custom carried out at Mohammedan weddings, except that what was strewn was only gold and silver coin. Jewels or coin, as it might be, were always abandoned to the slaves. One of the innumerable hardships of slavery! Slavery which the good people of England and New England who knew so little about it, were so relentless to abolish, in accomplishing which design they ruined so many fair countries.

Timour had one great ruby called "The Tribute of the World," on which he had his name engraved. This stone passed down to Babar and from him on to his descendants. When it came into the possession of Jehangir, he, despite the remonstrances of Noor Jehan, had it repolished and the name of his great ancestor erased. Noor Jehan then urged him to have it engraved with his own chiffré, but he refused.

"Timour is dead," he said, "and I shall die, and our dynasty will pass away. But as long as there are kings on earth, to the greatest one among them will belong "The Tribute of the World."

This ruby, taken from the last Moghul, is now among the jewels of the British crown.

At the time of their marriage Prince Khurram was nearly twenty-one and Arjumand Bannu was nineteen, the marriage taking place in 1612, three years after that of Jehangir and Noor Jehan.

Asaf Khan, the father of Arjumand, was the elder brother of Noor Jehan, which is a little difficult to understand, unless he had been left behind in Persia and rejoined his family later. But dates in Oriental history are sometimes as variable and uncertain as Oriental spelling. As usual in the family of the

Moghuls, the love of the husband bestowed a new name on the bride, who was henceforth known as Mumtaz Mahal (Crown of the Palace).

Their union proved an ideal love match and the exception to the rule that "the course of true love never did run smooth." For theirs indeed ran smoothly as water over glass.

Like his father, Khurram consulted his wife in everything, including the affairs of State. And like him he would never be separated from her, but took her with him everywhere. Her influence over him was very great, and she must have been, like the Empress her aunt, a woman of unusual intelligence. During the absence of Jehangir at Kabul and Lahore, Mumtaz occupied the Jasmine Tower, which seems ever to have fulfilled the purposes for which it was built, that of a nest of love.

At other times when Khurram was engaged in suppressing disorders here and there, she was with him in his camp. They had, according to various authorities, thirteen, fourteen or sixteen children. And it was at the birth of the last child and in a tent, during an expedition in the Deccan, after eighteen years of ideal happiness amid surroundings of all earthly splendour that Mumtaz Mahal died. She had lived indeed! Nor did the love which had glorified her life or the beauty and grandeur which had formed the glowing background end for her with death.

Mausoleus, king of Caria, had a tomb erected for him by his widow, which was the wonder of ancient Greece, and which has perpetuated his name to all time. But though both were memorials and

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

monuments of love, we well may doubt if the "Mausoleum" was the equal of the "Taj Mahal."

Shah Jehan (King of the World), the name which Khurram had assumed on his accession to the throne, was and remained, inconsolable at her loss. At first he even contemplated abdicating the throne and dividing his empire among his sons.

The Court was put into mourning for two years; music, jewels and perfumes were forbidden. And the month Zikad was kept as a month of mourning, during the rest of the reign.

But all this, as the Emperor realized, would end with his life. He desired (and no desire has ever been more gloriously fulfilled) to make his love, his Mumtaz Mahal—immortal! True to the traditions of his Tartar ancestors, the Emperor chose a garden across the Jumna, facing his own apartments in the palace of Agra, and there the Empress lay under a temporary dome, while the tomb which repeated her name, for "Taj" as well as "Mumtaz" means "Crown," was slowly growing, blooming like some marvellous flower.

She had died in 1630, two years after Shah Jehan's accession to the throne. It was not till two years later that the actual building was begun, for the collection of the precious materials and the choice of the design took time.

For seventeen years twenty thousand men were engaged in its construction, on which as has been well said, was concentrated the genius of the Empire. To describe it has been the effort of many minds. I shall venture to offer my impressions of it in a future chapter and meanwhile transcribe here the lines which seem to me to have expressed it best. "It is

## IMPERIAL ROMANCE

essentially feminine, the whole conception expresses the intention of the designers. It is Mumtaz Mahal herself, radiant in her youthful beauty, who still lingers on the banks of the shining Jumna, at early morn, in the glowing midday sun, or in the silver moonlight. Or rather, we should say, it conveys a more abstract thought; it is India's noble tribute to the grace of Indian womanhood—the Venus de Milo of the East.”

## XV

### SIC TRANSIT

### GLORIA MUNDI

**J**EHANGIR had showed great favour to the Jesuits and allowed two of his nephews to be instructed in the Christian religion. It is worthy of note that he tried the experiment on his nephews and not on his sons.

Shah Jehan, though he continued the policy of religious toleration established by Akbar, had no especial fondness for Christians and the only act of violence which we have to record of him after he became Emperor was the destruction of the settlement on the Hughli of the Portuguese. With this exception his reign was distinguished by justice, mildness and liberality. He governed India not only with great ability, but like a father.

As years wore on after the death of Mumtaz Mahal he sought distraction and abandoned himself more and more to a life of pleasure and self-indulgence. But no other Empress sat beside him and the first place at Court was filled by his eldest and favourite daughter, the beautiful and gentle Jehanara.

A loving and indulgent father, Shah Jehan had placed his four elder sons in positions of dignity and trust, making them all governors of provinces. Being the children of one mother it might be supposed

that they would be united in the bonds of fraternal affection, but alas, they were animated by a stronger sentiment, the passion for power.

In 1657 the Emperor was stricken with a serious illness and during his inability to conduct the affairs of State his eldest son, Dara Shikoh, was appointed Regent. He was a gracious and generous prince, who was however too lacking in experience and too accustomed to having his own way. When this news reached his brothers, Sujah and Murad, they, doubtless fearing that their father would die and that the empire would be left in the hands of Dara, declared their independence and, leaving their provincial governments, marched with all the followers they could muster to Agra.

On the way they were joined by their fourth brother, the strongest, ablest and most unscrupulous of them all, Aurangzib. Recognizing his superior ability his brothers put Aurangzib in command of their united forces. Meeting Dara outside of Agra they attacked and defeated him and three days afterwards they entered the city.

Shah Jehan, who by this time had recovered from his illness sent one of his chamberlains to Aurangzib with orders for him to leave Agra at once and return to his post in the Deccan. But the sly fox, Aurangzib, affected to believe that the mission was false and the Emperor was dead.

Inside the palace he had an ally as treacherous and as bold as himself, his younger sister, Rushanara, who kept him informed of all that was going on there, warned him of the designs to surprise and seize him. And through jealousy of Jehanara and ambition to be first, she did not hesitate to betray her father.

At length under pretence of an amicable settlement, Aurangzib persuaded Shah Jehan to withdraw his troops from the fort and to receive as envoy, his son Murad. The latter taking with him a body of picked men seized the person of the Emperor and before the people had any idea of what was happening, the crown of India had changed hands.

Many writers have expressed their surprise that no hand was raised, no sword drawn, in the defence of a sovereign who had ruled so well and with such loving kindness. It is indeed extraordinary, leaving duty and gratitude out of the question, that his people should not have feared to change his mild and generous rule for that of a ruthless tyrant like Aurangzib. But so it was, and we can only attribute it to the Moslem's acceptance of destiny.

Shah Jehan, who for thirty years had been the sovereign of a vast empire, was now confined to a small suite of rooms in his own palace, and the only ray of sunshine left him was the companionship of his daughter, Jehanara, who chose to share his captivity and attended him with the most unselfish devotion for the rest of his life.

Murad, the "cat's paw," and Sujah were immediately disposed of, being murdered by the orders of Aurangzib. Dara, who sometime afterwards returned in the attempt to rescue his father, was betrayed into the hands of his unnatural brother and immediately put to death. And Rushanara was rewarded by being made the first lady of the empire.

Having thus settled his family affairs Aurangzib turned his attention to those of State. He was a man of great mental and physical powers, possessing wonderful courage and energy. But he lacked fore-

sight and was wanting in all the softer qualities which win for a sovereign the love of his people. He ruled with firmness and strict justice, checked abuses, suppressed the dissolute conduct which had crept into the court and set an example of devotion to work and duty. But he was narrow and bigoted and the remembrance doubtless of his own treachery led him to distrust every one about him, with the result that reposing no confidence in his ministers or officials, he met with indifferent service in return.

He surrounded himself with fanatical Mohammedans who incited him to a bitter persecution of the Hindus. It was under their influence that most of the artists were banished (as unorthodox) from his court and many of the monuments and decorations of the reign of Akbar were mutilated or destroyed, as having transgressed the law of the Koran. Little of artistic value was produced during the half century in which he held the reins of power. And, after the sunshine of the three preceding reigns his was like a killing frost.

Rushanara's ambition was now satisfied. She maintained a state and magnificence greater than that of any of the former Empresses. The word empress was indeed no longer heard, though Aurangzib had at least two wives. Rushanara had assumed the Indian title of Begum, and the accounts given of her splendour and of her appearance in public lead us to suppose that the Mohammedan seclusion of women had been relaxed and that her position was more one of Indian independence. But for that matter, the Persian harem has never been as strict as the Turkish, or above all the Arabian, and it is possible that some innovations were,



introduced into the Imperial Harem in the time of Noor Jehan.

But not for long was Rushanara to enjoy the triumph of her perfidy. In 1664 Aurangzib fell dangerously ill. Seeing him unconscious and believing the end to be at hand, the Begum took from his finger the signet ring and issued letters to all the ministers and governors of provinces under the Imperial Seal, changing the succession from the Emperor's eldest son by a Rajput princess to the son of a Mohammedan wife, the latter being a boy of six, during whose long minority she herself hoped to reign. But treachery is apt to recoil on the traitor. Aurangzib recovered with disconcerting suddenness and discovered the plot. Many enemies whom her arrogance had created appeared against her and Rushanara silently disappeared from the stage of this world.

After seven years of close captivity Shah Jehan, whose health had long been feeble, felt the approach of death. He asked to be removed to a part of the palace from which he could look across the Jumna to the Taj. His request was granted and he was carried to his ancient bower of love, the Jasmine Tower. There in the arms of his loving Jehanara he died, his eyes fixed upon the monument of his love, for her to whom his heart had been true from early youth to old age—his Mumtaz Mahal!

Aurangzib who had kept his father *living* a prisoner paid him all honour when *dead*. Shah Jehan was buried beside his beloved in the vault of the Taj and a cenotaph of marble inlaid with semi-precious stones in the same Persian floral design was erected for him beside hers, under the dome. Only as hers

was already in the centre his is on the left side. A glowing inscription sets forth his virtues and achievements, recalling the fact that he, like Timour, was born at the conjunction of Jupiter and Venus. No reference is made to his misfortunes or their author, who expressed the pious wish that his tomb may ever flourish and his abode be in the heavens. Shah Jehan had attained the age of seventy-five years and died in 1666.

Immediately after his father's death Aurangzib left Agra for ever, removing his court to Delhi where he lived in the magnificent palace built by Shah Jehan. Doubtless the Agra palace was too full for him of ghosts! And the vision of the Taj across the river with its minarets pointing heavenward must have been to him less a dream of beauty than a reminder of the vengeance of God! The Jumna flowed under the walls of the palace at Delhi also, but it flowed *down* to Agra, strong and broad as the river of forgetfulness and bore its memories away to the sea.

Jehanara freed from her voluntary captivity went to Delhi also, where she lived in retirement for the rest of her life occupied with works of charity. There she built a little mosque, a copy of the Nagina Masjid (gem mosque) originally the oratory of Akbar, which had been included in the prison suite of Shah Jehan. But that is of white marble and hers of red stone. She died in 1681 and lies buried in an exquisite tomb in the green courtyard of a mosque between Delhi and Kutab. And on her tomb there is no grandiose inscription, but only the request addressed to the passer-by to "Pray for the soul of the poor Jehanara."

Aurangzib, who lived until his ninetieth year,

died in 1707. Despite his wisdom and ability, his bigotry and intolerance had made him many enemies, and the Moghul Empire was already undermined and doomed.

Sixty years afterwards, shrunk as had the Greek Empire in the time of Mohammed the Second, it was an empire only in name.

*Sic transit gloria mundi.*

## THE RED FORTRESS OF AKBAR

**W**E reached Delhi at ten o'clock and drove from the station through a rich tropical park to our hotel, the Cecil, a group of separate buildings, like most Indian hotels, surrounded by a garden and orange grove. Large trees spread beneath them a black velvet shade, but the two-storied and verandaed buildings were all white and gleamed like marble in the splendour of the Indian moonlight.

A flower, like a blue morning-glory, climbed the pillars of our veranda and fell over in long trails inside. Countless sweet and aromatic odours rose from the garden, expanding in its languorous sleep. The sky was like a dome of turquoise blue spangled with gold and silver and the enchantment of the night was indescribable.

We had passed through part of Hindu India and burnt incense at its shrines. Now we had reached a land more rare, romantic and wonderful still, a Moslem Empire of the "Arabian Nights."

I would that I could describe it as I saw and felt it myself, this land of the Pathan and Moghul! But language, though an excellent means of concealing our thoughts, is an inadequate vehicle for expressing

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

them on themes like these. Those who may read this book, it may be, will complain that it is written in superlatives, but I can only tell them in reply that there are not in the English language superlatives enough to express either Delhi or Agra.

The manager of the hotel took a calmer and more moderate view of it all than mine. He was very anxious to assist us, and as Rama was as much a stranger in Delhi as ourselves, I asked him what we had better go to see first. His immediate suggestion was "The monument of the English soldiers killed at the siege of Delhi." Always the Mutiny, as if it were the only thing that had ever happened in India! It seems that one can never get away from it.

The manager was a Swiss. He knew how to keep a hotel. Once more we had furniture in our rooms, even a writing-desk, and bedclothes and pillows on our beds, and the table was so good that it showed that one can live as well in India as anywhere else, if one takes the trouble. But either he lived in Delhi without seeing it, or perhaps the monument was what most of his guests considered the great sight of the old Indian capital. What it is like I cannot tell, for I never went to see it. The sentiment of raising a memorial to heroes who fell in the discharge of their duty must appeal to every one, but *not* the idea of raising it *there*.

The soldier who dies at his post deserves all honour, and though it is not his duty to judge of the justice of his cause, that honour and respect will always be much greater when his life is given in defence of his country. His own people and their descendants will treasure his name as no outside admirer can, and it is on his own soil, where it will call forth

## THE RED FORTRESS OF AKBAR

only living memories, that his monument should stand. But where the soldier, no matter how brave, is a foreign invader, the case is different. To erect a monument to him there, on the conquered soil, to remind the natives that their struggle had been in vain, is as great a mistake in policy as it is a lack of good taste.

We, in the Southern States of America, would not like to see statues erected in our cities to Lincoln and Grant. And Germany did not place her great Germania in Alsace or Lorraine, but on what had always been, even in the time of Cæsar, the German bank of the Rhine.

We drove into Delhi, for the Cecil like most Indian hotels is outside, down a long wide street bordered by low houses with verandas, on the lower floors of which are shops. Large trees lined it on both sides, and it looked, as do most Indian cities at first sight, like one of our own southern towns. But this is not the real Delhi, which lies on either side—a maze of narrow streets with high houses rich in all the carving and decoration of Indian Saracenic art, the old city built by the Moghuls before they had realised the necessities of the Indian climate, a city of Central Asia.

This street ends at the Great Mosque, the Jama Masjid and is called the Chandni Chauk. Through it a throng intensely picturesque is always passing, on foot or in long strings of bullock carts. Most of the shops are occupied by jewellers or ivory carvers, and into one of these, perhaps the finest, at the foot of the Great Mosque, we entered, tempted irresistibly, for it was full of all that Indian art can still produce.

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

The shop itself was fascinating, being a house built in Saracenic style, with pillared galleries around a courtyard in which a fountain played among tropical flowers. In an airy hall off one of these we sat on a divan spread with Persian rugs, while the proprietors, two dignified and solemn Hindu brothers, seated opposite us, displayed their treasures on a table placed between. Indian jewellery, bright as a broken rainbow; strings and skeins of pearls; ivory carvings, so soft and rich that they seemed as though they might melt away like mist; miniatures of old Moghuls and their empresses, and paintings of all the scenes on ivory; inlaid work of ivory and silver on precious woods of Delhi and Bombay; arms encrusted with gold and jewels; and marvellous silver of Kutch Behar, recalling the enchanted treasures of the "Arabian Nights."

We bought many things, and often during our visit we came again. Our hosts, for that they seemed, treated us with the most distinguished courtesy and devoted to us all the time that we desired. Being a woman and especially an American woman, I am fond of shopping, and I can truly say that I have enjoyed this Indian shopping the most.

Our fame as buyers evidently went abroad, for we were constantly visited at the hotel by jewellers of suave and confidential manners, who seated themselves on the floor and tempted us with many things, but especially with pearls and emeralds.

Oh Delhi! Incomparable Delhi! How happy in all things I was there! Indeed, had it rested with me, I think I should be there still. That first afternoon we visited the Fort, a wonder of red sandstone, built by Akbar, and containing, as

a red shell contains a milk-white nut, the marble palace of Shah Jehan. Entering the glowing walls of the fortress by the magnificent Lahore Gate, we stopped first at the gate house to see the little museum of the Moghuls: a pathetic collection of relics left behind by Bahadur Shah, the last Emperor of Delhi, when he fled by the water gate with his wife and a few faithful followers and escaped in a boat on the Jumna, while the English were storming the fortress from the land side.

Among other things is a costume of the Empress displayed in a glass case, a wide skirt and little bodice, woven of narrow gold and silver ribbons knotted together with pink silk and bordered with pink satin, and, to wear over it, a long pelisse of deep crimson moiré edged with gold.

From there we walked across a meadow of wild neglected grass to the Divan-i-Am, the magnificent public audience hall where Shah Jehan and Aurangzib once held their courts. This building, a hundred feet long and sixty feet wide, built of red sandstone in Indian Saracenic style, is considered the most noble Divan-i-Am in India.

Noble it is indeed and most royal, rich and red in the sunlight in its splendid repose. Like all other buildings of the kind it is open at three sides, supported on a double row of columns with engrailed arches between, and only closed by a wall at the back. In this back wall is a niche in which stood the famous peacock throne, which was carried off to Persia in 1739 by Nadir Shah.

It is generally believed that this throne was the work of an Italian goldsmith with a French name, Austin de Bordeaux, who was for some time in the



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

service of Shah Jehan, and who has even been represented as the architect of the Taj Mahal. From the description which we have of it which I shall give below, I should doubt this entirely. What Austin de Bordeaux did execute was the mosaic which lines the niche and which has been perfectly restored by the kindness and true artistic interest of Lord Curzon. I stepped into the niche to examine it and in spite of all my admiration for Lord Curzon, and without disparagement to Austin de Bordeaux, I felt an intense shock of disappointment. Since my childhood I have dreamed of the flower mosaics of the Taj, and now the thought which rushed through my mind was this: "Have I come over all these miles of water to look at Florentine mosaics?"

I love Italy, and though I have never *loved* Florentine mosaics, which have always seemed to me a little over strong and garish, still I have admired and found them in keeping there, but here—in India? The canary birds were startlingly yellow, the plums violently purple, the cherries hard red. Good it is no doubt as a Florentine mosaic, but Heaven be praised it is the only one in India! The truth is that Italian art, beautiful and satisfying as it is at home, looks hard and crude in the Indian sunlight and beside the marvels, one might say the miracles, of the Indian Saracenic.

To return to the peacock throne, so called from having two peacocks standing at the back of the royal seats with their tails expanded: it was six feet long by four feet wide, raised on six massive feet, and surmounted by a canopy supported on twelve columns. The entire structure was of gold inlaid with jewels, rubies, diamonds, emeralds and sapphires.

## THE RED FORTRESS OF AKBAR

The tails of the peacocks were formed of jewels in imitation of their natural feathers. A small parrot which stood between them was carved out of a single emerald, and from the canopy hung a fringe of pearls. It sounds fabulous, but the description is absolutely true. One may see in the Treasury at Constantinople a much smaller throne which the Sultan Selim I took from the Shah of Persia, all gold and jewels.

Between the Divan-i-Am and the private apartments of the palace there were other buildings, said to have been of great beauty: but these were either removed by the English to make more room, or wantonly destroyed by the soldiers, the palace having been used as barracks. We must rejoice and give thanks that the Divan-i-Khass, the apartments of Shah Jehan, and the baths still remain. These buildings, which are all separate and some distance apart, are connected by a canal of white marble, in which the water flows cool and clear through the centre of each, except in the Divan-i-Khass, where it passes beneath the floor.

The Divan-i-Khass, which is ninety feet long by sixty-seven feet wide, is built of white marble (like all Indian marble shining and soft as ivory), is one of the most beautiful and graceful buildings in the world. Open on three sides, the roof is supported by the usual double arcade of rectangular pillars inlaid in an exquisite Persian floral design with semi-precious stones. The arches above them are carved in relief, with arabesques and Indian lilies, and all the carving is gilded. At each corner of the roof is an exquisite Indian cupola. The ceiling was once of silver, but was carried away by the Jhats, who

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

had a weakness for the precious metals, in the eighteenth century. It has been replaced by one of wood richly carved and gilded. The whole effect of the interior is one of soft and glowing splendour, like a sunset in June. At either end of the hall over the two outer arches is the famous Persian inscription: "If Heaven can be on earth, it is this—oh, it is this!" It is indeed impossible to imagine anything more beautiful!

Following the marble pavement which borders the canal to the right, we came first to the pavilion of Shah Jehan. Here we entered an open vestibule with an ante-chamber on each side, and *au fond*, a grille of marble lacework, which has no equal in the world. Above this, framed in a carved and gilded arch, are the scales of justice balanced above the crescent moon, the emblem, perfectly justified, of Shah Jehan.

Behind this screen is the dining-room of the Emperor, the canal flowing through the middle. On the left his bedroom, which is square; and on the right his salon, octagonal (with four windows filled with marble screens, and one open, with a balcony hung out over where once rolled the Jumna) and crowned with a high Saracenic dome.

In these apartments all is perfect still. The lower part of the walls is inlaid with a floral mosaic of semi-precious stones, while the upper part and the ceiling are carved with flowers painted in soft reds and greens, outlined with gold. A second screen of lacework, slightly gilded, divides the dining-room from the arched portico which finishes the pavilion. The whole *ensemble* is that of a vision of enchantment. Still following the canal we reached the harem, a building of open colonnades with a small enclosed

room at each corner. The columns and dado, which are of marble, are intact, but the upper part which was all "ardish" (stucco inlaid with mirrors) was destroyed by the English soldiers quartered there, who amused themselves by shicing stones at the mirrors and digging the precious stones out of the walls. We should not blame the soldiers but their officers who permitted the destruction of these marvellous palaces.

The canal, as we have said, flows through the building and in the centre is, or rather was, a fountain whose immense round basin was an Indian lily. Sad, but most beautiful in its wrecked state, what must this hall have been when spread with Persian carpets, hung with curtains of crimson and gold brocade?

On the other side of the Divan-i-Khass are the baths connected with it by the canal, which leads from one tank to another. These rooms are four in number with a long corridor between. The lower part of the walls is marble inlaid with semi-precious stones in flower mosaic. The upper decoration and that of the ceiling have been entirely destroyed. Each room has a dome. In the first of these rooms is a square shallow tank where the children were bathed. In the second is the rose-water fountain in which the bathers scated themselves after their baths, and in which showers of rose-water played over them from numerous small silver pipes. In the third room across the corridor is the cold plunge in a large sunken tank in the floor. And in the fourth the hot bath, where the hot water ran in from a fountain in the wall. In the third room in a large bay, screened with marble lacework, stands the *lit du repos* of Shah Jehan. It is a marble couch raised

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

on four small pillars and gracefully curved and scalloped at each end. This couch is entirely inlaid with a mosaic of semi-precious stones in the usual Persian floral design.

And now I must try to give an idea of these Persian flower mosaics, so different, so unspeakably more beautiful than the Florentine that they compare with each other as diamonds do with paste. In the first place these designs, which are sometimes, as at Amber, cups and flacons or musical instruments, but generally flowers, are of inimitable truth and grace. Secondly, the stones being semi-precious instead of merely marbles, as in the Florentine, the garish colours of the latter are avoided, and the effect is infinitely soft, rich and harmonious. The stones used are jade, agate, amethyst, cornelian, turquoise, lapis lazuli, onyx and jasper, sardonyx, and sometimes coral. There are still a few artists in India who practise this art, or rather the art has been recently revived by the sympathy and interest of Lord Curzon, by whose efforts some of the mutilated mosaics have been restored.

Close to the palace, to the west, is the Moti Masjid (Pearl Mosque), an exquisite miniature of the Pearl Mosque at Agra, built by Aurangzib in 1659, and which compares with the original as the Sainte Chapelle compares with the Cathedral of Rheims. To me it is more beautiful, just as Lake Lemán, at which I am looking at the moment, is more beautiful than the sea, and it is the most perfect specimen I know of the Indian *motif* of "The jewel in the casket."

A high wall of red sandstone encloses it in a square; a wall carved in four rows of panels, one above the other, and finished with a rampart of five scalloped

## THE RED FORTRESS OF AKBAR

points. Above this wall, glowing red as red jasper in the sunlight, rise the three ivory pineapple domes, the lanterns and the lily minarets of the "pearl."

It is like a jasper vase full of white lilies! We entered by a small door, the only one, of bronze, exquisitely carved in arabesque designs in low relief, and found ourselves in the courtyard (forty feet broad by thirty-five deep) which with the mosque fills the interior space. Here all is shining white, so clear and bright that as the sunlight reflects from one wall to another, it seems almost as if it were built of crystal. The floor is marble, the red walls are lined with marble, and the mosque raised on five steps with its three arches and three domes is all of the softest, warmest marble. Marble, cold in other countries, is warm in India. Like crystal and yet like ivory, there are no words in our language to describe it.

As I walked across the shining pavement I thought that if a few gold-fish had been strewn about one would seem to be walking in water. Three arches broad the mosque is two arches deep. Arches, columns and ceiling are all lightly carved with flowers in low relief in Persian design. Beside the Kiblah (the niche towards Mecca), stands an exquisite reading-desk in carved ebony, and that is all. Lanterns there were, but they are gone.

Fortunately I have pictures of the "Moti" to show to others. I do not need them myself, for I keep it always in my heart. There were a number of unsightly modern buildings within the palace precincts, but by the influence of Lord Curzon these have been removed. Also at his instance, some restoration of the buildings at the eastern end of the

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

fortress was accomplished, but nothing can recall to life and beauty the many royal pavilions so barbarously destroyed after the celebrated Mutiny.

We left the fortress by the Delhi Gate, a most imposing structure, flanked by massive octagonal towers. On the inner side two stone elephants stand, one on either hand, from which it is often called the Elephant Gate. Each of the elephants originally carried two stone riders, which were destroyed in 1857. By the kindness of Lord Curzon the elephants have been restored. The new riders are his gift.

We have mentioned the flight of the last Moghul Emperor, Bahadur Shah, by the water gate at the storming of the fortress. His escape was but temporary, a few days later he and the Empress were captured at the tomb of Humayun. Bahadur was a man of eighty years. For twenty years he had borne the title of Emperor, with the semblance of royalty and some shadow of power under a British Protectorate. Was it to be wondered at that he joined the Mutiny in the hope of throwing off the yoke of the stranger and re-establishing his dynasty. He was brought a prisoner to his own palace and confined in the west tower of the Elephant Gate.

The next day his sons, who had held the fortress so gallantly through the siege, surrendered to the English and were all immediately shot in front of the Delhi Gate, September 22nd, 1857. They were royal princes, the last scions of the Moghul dynasty, the last descendants of Timour, and *they had surrendered*. The old Emperor was subsequently taken a state prisoner to Rangoon, where he died in 1862. Thus ended the line of the great Moghuls.

We drove through the gate and stopping the carriage, sat looking back at the Lal Kila. Lal Kila, the Red Fort. Red indeed! The sun was setting and the high red crenelated walls blazed in the sinking splendour as though dyed in blood.

The conquerors have turned aside the Jumna, so that it no longer flows below the palace walls. The water gate is dry, and the next who flees from Lal Kila must seek another way.



## OLD DELHI

THE next morning we visited the Jama Masjid, a glorious mosque raised imposingly high on its platform of red stone from whence it commands the city. Its noble gates are approached by majestic flights of steps. Of the three, all may enter from the north or south, but the central or eastern Gate is never opened except for royalty. The Moghul Emperors entered here, and now the Viceroys. The gates were thrown open for King George.

Entering, one finds oneself in a great courtyard, three hundred and twenty-five feet square, surrounded by a graceful red cloister, with a fountain in a great marble basin in the centre. The gates are of brass richly carved with arabesques. The mosque fills the west side of the quadrangle. Being accustomed to the mosques of Europe and Africa it seems very strange at first that all the Indian mosques are turned towards the west. One must constantly remind oneself that here Mecca is west, not east.

Like all Indian mosques of the Moghul and later Pathan periods, the Jama Masjid is a portico enclosed only on the western side, in which is the Kiblah. Practically the architecture is the same as that of the audience halls, an entire departure from

the real Saracenic mosque designed in the first instance for the Arab conquerors by the Greek architects of Alexandria.

The design of the façade seems to me more Persian than Indian Saracenic, but the latter predominates in the detail and in the three splendid domes of white marble relieved with lines of black. The two noble minarets one hundred and thirty feet high, like the Jama Masjid itself, are of red sandstone, and marble inlaid with black. The only date given of its construction is 1658, the year in which Aurangzib usurped the throne, and it remains uncertain whether it was built by him or Shah Jehan. I would rather think it was the work of the good father than that of the bad son, but be that as it may, the Jama Masjid is most noble and never to be forgotten.

We walked through the old streets of Delhi and felt as though we had been carried away from India on one of King Solomon's flying carpets and were wandering in some city of Central Asia. The streets are five or six feet wide, with a deep gutter on each side, over which the lower steps of the house doors project like marble fans. There, in shops open to the air, Indians sit working at their trades, just as their ancestors did twenty-five centuries ago. Above are exquisite bays and balconies of marble lacework, and along the silent sunny streets, mysterious closed doors of wood richly carved, or brass or iron exquisitely wrought in arabesques. Streets of the "Arabian Nights."

In one of those streets is hidden a Jain temple. From without one only sees a beautiful carved stone doorway surmounted by a still richer balcony. Here

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

we were obliged to stop and take off our shoes, which were replaced by sandals.. Not, as in a mosque, to prevent our profaning the sacred floor, but (the Jains are very practical) to save the polish of the marble pavement. Thus equipped, we walked along a stone corridor and up a flight of steps and found ourselves in the courtyard of the temple, which is all of shining white marble and surrounded by an Indian arcade. An exquisite screen of marble protects the shrine, which is raised above the court. Therein on a triple throne of marble lacework, under a canopy of ivory enamelled in blue and gold, sits the "Tirthanker," gazing inscrutably before him with his uncanny crystal eyes, while over his head arches a roof of blue and gold like the sky, spangled with stars. Thank God I am not of this religion!

Again we visited the Lal Kila and found the palace and the pearl mosque still more beautiful. Again, again, one wants to do everything in Delhi once more!

Our Hindoo merchants had made me a chain, from my husband's design, of pearls, enamelled beads from Jaipur, and others of gold filigree, which are a speciality of Delhi. To me it is the most beautiful chain that I have ever seen, for it reflects the whole beauty and splendour and charm of the East.

We found another shop full of precious rugs and jewellery and various antiques, kept by a Hungarian, Imre Schweiger, which I would recommend to everyone. Never shall I forget the hours we spent there, moving our straw chairs around the courtyard as the sun advanced, looking over Persian, Mecca and Bokhara rugs.

The finest piece of Indian jewel work that I have ever seen was there, a *chef d'œuvre* of the time of Akbar. A round chased plate of crystal, on which stood four figures also carved in crystal and ornamented with diamonds and rubies. Shiva, Parvati, Ganesh and the Nandi bull, and in the centre the Lingam, a pearl on a ruby and diamond altar.

Treasures were there of Persia and of China, which it was difficult to tell apart, showing the influence of these two countries, so unlike in most things, on each other's art in times gone by. And treasures—strange, wild mysterious treasures from Thibet—which now outsiders and barbarians, like ourselves, have the opportunity to acquire for the first time in the history of the world. Prayer-wheels in bronze and silver, Buddhist rosaries (the idea originated with them), and strange jewellery and arms enriched with turquoises.

I have a string of matrix turquoises from which hangs one shaped like a little pear, brought from Lhasa among the loot; and my husband has a whip-handle of silver-gilt, inlaid with true turquoises, of which not one is wanting, a really perfect piece; our souvenirs of this last "Unknown Land."

One morning early we drove out to Kutub, the old capital of the Pathans, through a lovely country all green with large and spreading trees, such as one finds scattered all over India. On all sides were monuments and remnants of Saracenic architecture, an old fortress and innumerable mosques and tombs—an ideal landscape of the "Arabian Nights"! We stopped first at the tomb of Humayun. A noble structure admirably situated in a high walled garden, in which is a large marble tank. Almost pure

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

Saracenic, it is built of red sandstone and white marble. The design consists of five octagons, the central one much larger than the surrounding four, which are joined to it on one side only. Between each octagon is a deep porch, and the whole is raised on majestic red steps. Various emperors and empresses of the declining dynasty are buried here in the octagon towers, but in the central chamber Humayun sleeps alone, in a cenotaph of white marble devoid of any ornament or inscription, under a splendid dome. The floors of inlaid marble spread fresh and cool around him, and the golden sunlight filters through the marble lacework which fills the windows. All is calm and beautiful. All is peace and repose.

One pities him for his trials and misfortunes, and rejoices in his rest. But—I could not help the reflection—it was *maladroit* of him to fall down the stairs after having re-conquered India! Fergusson says of Humayun's tomb: "Its plan is that afterwards adopted at the Taj, but used here without the depth and poetry of that celebrated building. It is however a noble tomb, and anywhere else must be considered a wonder."

We mounted to the roof, and here it was a great surprise to find ourselves in a little forest of Indian pavilions, airy cupolas with scalloped arches, pin-cushion domes and all the other marks of their Jain extraction. Fairy-like it was, and after the severe splendour of the pure Saracenic architecture, the arabesque plaques and honeycomb work below, it seemed like looking at the other side of the moon. From this eminence the view was wonderful. All around and below us spread a landscape which seemed that of an enchanted country of the "Arabian

Nights." I know that I use that expression too often, but to the majority in the Occident, "Arabian Nights" are the only words which convey or express the bright side of the Orient.

Opposite the tomb is a delicious garden with exquisite kiosks on the corners of the walls, the ideal of that from which "Beauty's" father picked the famous rose. All around, the trees, the buildings, here and there the clusters of palms about the wells, the ox-carts moving slowly among the roads, the horses, more than all the people, seen from afar by their brilliant attire, all fitted perfectly to the scene. Nothing jarred, there was "no smudge of West." As Jaipur is pure Hindustan, so is this pure Islam; one of the few scenes still perfect and unspoiled in the world.

Alas, it will not be for long! Since then King George has spoken words put into his mouth by others who had their own ends to serve. Delhi is to be made the capital of British India! Calcutta is to be ruined financially, and Delhi historically and artistically.

Those who wish it (it is said in India that they have bought up the ground to sell it again to the Government) indulge in sentiment about the joy of India in having the capital of the Moghuls restored. But they forget that India contains two hundred and forty millions of people, only sixty-two and a half millions of whom are Mohammedans; that though the Moghuls were beloved in their day for their justice and benevolence, they were still of an alien race; and, above all things, that day is long since past. England conquered India from the Mahrattas and the Sikhs, and it is not likely that their descendants will care to see the prestige of the Moghul capital restored.

## XVIII

### KUTUB OF THE PATHANS

**S**TILL further along the road to Kutub we stopped at the Dargah, the shrine of the great Pathan saint of the thirteenth century, Nizam-ed-din Aulin.

Entering the gate of the enclosure, we found ourselves beside a tank, the water of which is a wonderful bright green. The Mohammedan conquerors took from the Hindus all in their art and customs that was best, and so we find, as with the latter, a sacred tank in every holy place. From some low tombs and buildings at one side, boys dived into the water for our benefit, and while we watched I thought over the legend of the place.

While this tank was being made for the holy man who had fixed his dwelling here, the Sultan of Delhi, Tughlak Shah, requisitioned the workmen to assist in the building of his fortress of Tughlakabad. The saint thereupon arranged to continue his work at night, but the Sultan, who was of an unaccommodating disposition, refused to allow him the use of oil. But not thus could a Moslem saint be daunted. Nizam-ed-din filled his lamps with the water of the spring which burned brightly and illuminated the labour of the workmen till the tank was completed.

## KUTUB OF THE PATHANS

Passing the tank we walked through two covered passages with a court between, and found ourselves in a grass-grown enclosure shaded with splendid trees, in the centre of which stands the saint's tomb. This is an exquisite little building only eighteen feet square, surrounded by a broad veranda, built of the softest white marble. To me it looked like a miniature Jain temple. Through the screens of marble lacework one looks into the interior and sees the tomb enclosed by a marble railing and covered with a canopy entirely inlaid with mother-of-pearl.

Guardians are always sitting beside it, and these are the descendants of the original ones, appointed on the saint's death (at the age of ninety-two) in 1324. They live in a little village beyond the enclosure and devote their time to the care of the shrine.

To the west of the tomb is a fine red sandstone mosque with a central chamber and two bays. To the north a rest-house built by Aurangzib, and to the south are three royal tombs built of white marble. At one of these we paused in reverence. A tomb open to the sky, the grave covered with fresh grass and marked by a simple headstone. The screen of marble lacework which encloses it (perhaps seven feet high) is one of the most beautiful in India, and on either side are marble doors, such as I have never seen elsewhere, each panel, for they are double doors, carved with a sheaf of Indian lilies. Fit casket for such a jewel, for here sleeps in the green silence of this holy ground the sweet Princess Jehanara. The inscription addressed by herself to the passer-by I have already given: "Pray for the soul of the poor Jehanara." I prayed for her then, and still,



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

but she needs no prayers, for if there is a heaven, as we believe, her soul is already there!

We drove on to Kutub, the old capital of Kutub-ed-din and his descendants—the slave dynasty. Before entering the city, long since deserted, we stopped at the Dak Bungalow or rest-house, to eat the lunch which we had brought with us, and which proved very good.

As this was our first acquaintance with a Dak Bungalow—an institution which has been established all over India by the British Government for the help and convenience of travellers—it is worthy of description. These rest-houses are all alike, long and low, built entirely of stone, with a verandah along the length of the front. The rooms are furnished with tables, chairs, camp beds folded up against the walls, and at all the windows green Venetian blinds. In each there is a mirror, a delicate attention to our sex, and generally a dressing-room, with a stone bin for the bath tub, adjoins. A Hindu, known as the butler, with one or two assistants is always in charge, to wait on strangers and prepare such meals as they may order, or which the neighbourhood can provide, and as they are clean and quiet, they are often preferable to the so-called hotels.

Of the proud city of Kutub-ed-din little remains besides the magnificent ruins of the Great Kuwat-al-Islam Mosque. These are enclosed in a crumbling wall about four hundred feet square, the space being divided into three courtyards, the first of which we reached by a short flight of steps under a vaulted gateway. Seen already outside and from afar, the first object which riveted our gaze was the celebrated tower built by Kutub-ed-din as his own memorial,

## KUTUB OF THE PATHANS

the monument of a slave become an Emperor, the incomparable Kutub Minar!

This tower, the finest in the world, stands to the left and in front of the Great Mosque—beautiful, calm, overpowering; glowing red and shining white in the sunlight; Tower of Victory still overlooking the ruins of long past splendour in majestic repose! Figures are meaningless to represent it, but we have no other standard: two hundred and thirty-eight feet high it is, forty-seven feet in diameter at its base, and only nine feet at the top. Built in five stories, the three lower ones are of red sandstone, the two upper of white marble. The red stories are fluted with semi-circular and angular flutings, and each one is crowned with a balcony richly corbelled with honeycomb work, from which the next story rises. The two marble stories were rebuilt in 1368 by the Sultan Tughlak, who also added a cupola. But in 1803 the whole tower was shaken by an earthquake and the cupola thrown down. This was badly restored, but fortunately at such a height it detracts but little from the effect.

Bands of text inscriptions encircle each story, beautiful in themselves and adding greatly to the richness of the whole effect. The tower has several inscriptions, the lowest of which bears the names of Kutub-ed-din and Mohammed ben Sani but without a date. The Great Mosque, as we know by the inscription over the East Gate, was begun by Kutub-ed-din in 1193, while he was still the lieutenant of Mohammed Ghorî; but when he began to build the Kutub Minar he was doubtless already king.

Turning at last from the contemplation of the Kutub Minar we realized that we were indeed in

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

one of the most surpassing ruins of the world. The whole enclosure occupies a platform on which, before the Mohammedan conquest, stood the great Hindu temple of Rai Pithora.

The long inscription, already quoted, over the East Gate states that the materials for the Great Mosque were obtained from the demolition of twenty-seven idolatrous temples. This statement is to me of intense interest: "Twenty-seven temples" demolished in the end of the twelfth century. What temples were these? As we have seen, the old Indian temples before the time of Buddhism, and the Buddhist temples themselves, except those cut in the rock, have passed away. The two oldest *built* temples extant, date from the eighth century, marking the fall of Buddhism, while most of the great temples were built in the eleventh or the thirteenth centuries. Bearing this in mind, four centuries had elapsed between the restoration of Brahminism and the Mohammedan conquest. Some of these temples were built during this period, some were Jain temples, some must have been Buddhist.

The court of the mosque is surrounded by a cloister, which for my part I believe that the Mohammedans left as they found it, whose structure shows great antiquity. Like the Jain cloister, it is built in a succession of square sections, each covered by a small flat dome. As time has bared some of the skeleton of the structure, the construction is seen to be that of all old Hindu architecture—the horizontal arch and dome built like a crow's nest, or as a child builds with blocks. These cloisters were built without mortar, the builders relying on the weight of the stones to hold them together, which

## KUTUB OF THE PATHANS

indeed they have done till now. But the absence of mortar here as elsewhere indicates a remote antiquity. The Pathans seem to have brought no architects with them, or rather perhaps no builders. They were very decided in their tastes and determined to have pure Saracenic architecture, but they were obliged to rely on the Indians to build it. The result is curious. The Hindus, following their own devices, carried the pineapple arches up as far as they could on horizontal courses of stone and then closed them with long slabs at the top. The decoration was carried out in the orthodox manner, and it is only where these arches have fallen that the secret has been revealed.

Of the mosque itself some of the stone roof still remains, but it is quite overtopped and hidden by the grand screen of pointed arches, which extends before it and across the whole west side of the enclosure. This screen, built by Kutub after the mosque was finished and extended on each side by Altmash, is pure Saracenic and doubtless was the work of architects imported from Central Asia. Like all the rest of the mosque it is of red sandstone, and its effect, even now in ruins as it is, is most magnificent.

In front of the great central arch stands the oldest monument of India, the iron pillar known as "The Arm of Fame of Raja Dhava." This pillar, which is a solid shaft of wrought iron, is twenty-two feet above the ground, of which fifteen are smooth and round, over sixteen inches in diameter. And three feet and a half, form the beautiful and entirely original capital. The iron pillar records its own history in a deeply cut Sanscrit inscription of six lines on its west face,

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

which was translated by Mr. James Prinsep as follows :  
“ The pillar is called the Arm of Fame of Raja Dhava. It is said that he subdued a people on the Sindhu, named Baklikas, and obtained with his own arm an undivided sovereignty on the earth for a long period.”

The pillar, it is thought, once bore the Garuda (the eagle of Vishnu), and it was said that its base rested on the head of a serpent, but thereby hangs a tale.

Anang Pal of the Thumar dynasty, whose name is also inscribed on the pillar with the date Samwat 1109 (A.D. 1052), wished to see if the tradition about the serpent's head were true. He therefore dug it up. But his unwise curiosity was signally punished—the Thumar dynasty ending with himself.

The real date of the pillar is unknown, but various authorities have assigned it to the second, third or fourth century of our era.

Outside the enclosure and behind the mosque is the tomb of Altmash, the second son of Kutub (who followed his brother Arana after the latter's short reign of one year, and ruled the Pathan Empire 1211 A.D. till 1236. It is built of red sandstone in pure Saracenic style, and does great credit to the Indian architects by whom it was erected.

A generation indeed had passed away since the Great Mosque had been begun, and they had had time to learn, but this tomb must have tried them even then, for it is of that form most dear to Saracenic art—square below, octagonal in the middle, and round at the top. Doubtless to relieve themselves after the strain, they crowned it with a horizontal dome, which in the course of centuries has fallen

in, so that the building now stands open to the sky.

The interior is entirely covered with decoration of arabesques and texts from the Koran, very finely executed and beautiful. In the west side is the Kiblah, of white marble, yellow with age; and in the centre Sultan Altmash lies under a high red cenotaph, the upper part of which has been recently restored.

Fergusson says of this noble monument: "In addition to the beauty of its details, it is interesting as being the oldest tomb known to exist in India."

On either side of the Great Mosque are memorials, very different in themselves, of the great Ala-ed-din, the conqueror of Southern India.

To the south-east, the "Alai Darwazah," a high square building, exquisite in design and decoration, built by Ala-ed-din in 1310 A.D.—710 A.K. The building is of red sandstone, with a high doorway on each side and two windows in each corner filled with massive lattices of white marble. The three outer doorways have magnificent horseshoe arches, the print of the shoe of the Prophet's horse, over which are Arabic inscriptions containing the name of Ala-ed-din, and his acquired name of "Sikander Sani" (the Second Alexander). The inner doorway has a rounded arch and leads into the enclosure of the mosque. The whole building is carved in arabesques in low relief, and the effect is wonderfully rich and beautiful. I consider it indeed the most perfect specimen of pure Saracenic art which I have ever seen. (I have never been in Spain.) To look at it, in ruins as it is, gave me the most intense pleasure, and I tore myself away from it with regret.

On the north side of the platform of the Great

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

Mosque stands what may be called the only failure of Ala-ed-din, the Ali Minar. This is a tower built by the conqueror after his return from the south, which should have equalled if not surpassed the Kutub Minar. But—man proposes—Kutub had been a slave and became an Emperor! his Tower of Victory soars on high unrivalled in the world!

Ala-ed-din was born in the purple, the heir to the throne. His brilliant career only followed the natural sequence of events, and his tower rose no higher than his own achievements.

Its present height is only eighty-seven feet, including the plinth on which it stands. What we see is only the core of rough stones, which should have been encased in red sandstone. Why it was left unfinished is matter of uncertainty. Beside the grace and beauty of the other ruins its appearance is both barbaric and sad.

At some distance beyond are a group of ruined buildings, one of which is believed to have been the tomb of Ala-ed-din, but whatever inscriptions there were have faded away. Other ruins there are still beyond, of mosques and tombs. As in most deserted cities, the habitations of man have passed away and only the shrines of God and the dwellings of the dead remain.

I cannot describe them all, and I feel that my whole description of Kutub is so inadequate that I can only hope that the reader may come and see it for himself.

Of all the ruins in the world I believe these to be the most beautiful. Anyone who sees them must remember them always, for not only do they fill the heart with beauty and regret, but they teach better

## KUTUB OF THE PATHANS

than many books a great lesson, the lesson of the transitoriness of earthly glory.

“ The one remains, the many change and pass,  
Heaven's light forever shines, earth's shadows flee,  
Life like a dome of many coloured glass,  
Stains the white radiance of eternity.”



## XIX

### TAJ BIBI KA ROZA.\*

**T**HERE are many other things to see in Delhi —many things of interest and of beauty. There is the Kara Masjid (Black Mosque), built in the fourteenth century by the Pathan Emperor, Firoz Shah; the Sonahri Masjid, tragically famous because in its portico sat Nadir Shah of Persia, watching the massacre of the inhabitants of Delhi by his soldiers, which lasted from sunrise till noon.

There is the caravanserai in the great square, built by the Princess Jehanara for the comfort and repose of travellers and strangers; and there is her mosque which, except that it is not enclosed in walls and has no lily minarets, seems to have been a copy of the Pearl. It stands outside the town against a background of rich trees and is known only as the Mosque of Jehanara. But it is red instead of white and might well be called the "Ruby."

And still others and many others, but I believe that in describing cities or countries it is a mistake to go too much into detail and describe too much. Even as in a room crowded with furniture and bric-à-brac one thing destroys the effect of another, so the description of too many things of minor

\* "Taj Bibi ka Roza." This is a corruption of Mumtaz which became Mumtaz and finally Taj.

## TAJ BIBI KA ROZA

importance detracts from the great things, confuses and clouds with indistinctness the whole picture.

The people of Delhi are the finest that I have seen in India. Tall, splendidly made, with fine features, they have preserved the pride and dignity of a conquering race through all these centuries, for most of them are the descendants of the Pathans. Their costume is the same as that of Rajputana, or rather the Rajputs have adopted theirs. But their colours are brighter and more varied and the women wear yellow, orange and a deep rich blue in addition to the Rajput red and green.

All in all, Delhi to me was the most attractive place in India, the place which charmed and chained my imagination the most. I left it with the greatest regret, and I think the only thing which induced me to do so at all was the thought that we were going to Agra.

Only a two hours' journey by rail, we arrived at Agra on a glorious afternoon, though indeed all afternoons are glorious there.

The hotel, which is also a "Cecil" and owned by the same persons, is an old Indian house consisting of a high and vaulted ground floor with a large dining-room and hall in the centre, and a white stone verandah along the front.

It was rather dreary and bare after our attractive Delhi hostelry, but we hardly took time to look at it, for in the first hour of our arrival we went to see the Taj Mahal! Wonderful moment, to which I can truly say I had looked forward since my thirteenth year. Supreme experience of India!

Volumes have been written on the subject. Language has been almost exhausted in its praise!

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

There are even some who have declared themselves disappointed (Mark Twain among the rest), but after all *who can describe the Taj?*

Like all other great Indian tombs, the Taj is in a garden; a garden bought by Shah Jehan from the nobleman to whom it belonged, because it lay just across the river from his own apartments in the palace of the Fort. This garden, which is full of tall and splendid trees, canals and fountains, the ideal of the Moslem paradise, is surrounded on three sides by high red sandstone walls, surmounted with a graceful parapet. Walls and trees hide everything of the jewel within, except the great dome and the minarets, from the outside world.

Our carriage entered, through the Ganj Taj Gate, an enclosed square surrounded by various low but very good buildings of red sandstone in Saracenic style with graceful arcades, among them two tombs and a caravanserai.

In the centre of the left side of this court or square is the great gateway of the garden, which Mr. Fergusson justly calls "a worthy pendant to the Taj itself." It is indeed a glorious gate! Broad and deep and imposingly high, built of red sandstone richly carved, and inlaid with ornaments and texts in white marble, one of which invites the pure of heart to enter the gardens of paradise, it is pierced by a single entrance with a pineapple arch and crowned by twenty-six white marble cupolas. So deep is it, and its gateway so full of red velvet shadows, that one must enter to see what lies beyond.

Then—a canal, a band of light framed in marble and broken by the jets of fountains, leads the way between rows of dark green cypresses.

And—at the end, raised on a marble terrace on the brink of the Jumna with only the blue sky behind—the Taj Mahal, soft as ivory in the Indian sunlight and shining like crystal, floats in unearthly beauty like a vision of enchantment! So light, so airy, so much more beautiful than the most beautiful! One longs to grasp it lest it fade away and dissolve in mist. Truly it is like nothing else in this world! I can only compare it to the fata Morgana!

We sat down on the high steps which lead down from the gateway into the garden and watched it for a long time in silence. Watched, rather than looked at it, for one who sees it for the first time is haunted by the fear that it will vanish. One of the many master-strokes which called it into being was thus placing it directly on the bluff overhanging the river with no wall behind it. This intensifies the impression that it is an illusion—a mirage which has risen from, and might sink back into the Jumna.

At last we rose and walked along the canal to the centre of the garden where it is crossed by another canal. At the intersection is a square raised marble pond full of water lilies. Here we stopped again, sitting on one of the marble benches with which the pond is flanked. One hesitates to approach the Taj too suddenly. One cannot, it is too beautiful!

Everyone knows the shape and semblance of the Taj from pictures. But one may not realize that it stands on a platform of white marble, eighteen feet high, at the four corners of which are the four minarets.

One enters a doorway in this platform and mounts by a concealed staircase to the top where one stands

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

on a shining pavement, and there at last the Taj is within our grasp. The Taj Mahal is ours!

Oh supreme moment! Nothing, it is said, lasts for ever, but that moment, nay every moment, beginning with the one in the red shadow of the pineapple arch, remains with us always and lasts for all our time!

In the body, as I write, I am on the shore of Lake Lemana in a dark semi-tropical night, and the sound of music is in my ears, but my soul is in the Indian sunlight on the banks of the Jumna!

Those who love weights and measures and the prices of things must look for them elsewhere. I cannot measure or weigh or count the cost of the Taj. As we have said before, it was produced by the combined genius and art of India. But also many of its master-workers were brought from Samarkand, Shiraz and Bagdad, and its actual architect was either a Turk or a Persian—the question is still in doubt—named Ustad Isa. The plan follows that of the tomb of Humayun, an octagon in which the sides are pierced with niches and surmounted by a high central dome, surrounded by four domed Indian pavilions.

The whole building is of the purest, softest, most radiant white marble, all the decoration of both exterior and interior being a Persian flower mosaic executed in precious and semi-precious stones.

The minarets which occupy the four corners of the platform are of white marble, the stones laid in black cement, and each one has two circular balconies and is surmounted by an Indian cupola. They have been likened to four maids of honour attending on their queen.

In front of the Taj an avenue of rich trees extends east and west, at each end of which, and built against the garden wall, is a fine red sandstone mosque, like all the rest, in Indian Saracenic style. These mosques were used for the religious service of the Taj. In the one towards the east the worshippers (in the early days, the mourners) assembled and then proceeded to the one towards the west, where only the prayers were said.

The Mohammedans pray for their dead as we do for ours, only better it would seem, for they never forget them but assemble to intercede for them at the tombs and in the cemeteries every Friday in the year.

The avenue of the cross canal is also finished by two fine pavilions of red sandstone, so that each vista in this ideal Tartar garden is perfect and complete.

Before entering the Taj we walked around it, slowly and spellbound, drinking in every detail as the bees drink honey from the flowers. At the back the marble terrace extends along the sheer bank of the Jumna, protected only by a marble balustrade. Across the wide river stands the palace in which she lived and played her part in the world's history, this beautiful, gentle and loving queen! Here we see overhanging the red walls of the fortress, her own nest of love, the Jasmine Tower! We gaze across at it in longing and regret for the days that are no more! Then we turn back our eyes and let them rest on her wondrous monument, and our hearts are satisfied.

The Taj is considered the most beautiful of all the buildings now in the world, but it is not that alone. It is love made tangible, crystallized!

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

At length we entered a shining corridor which surrounds the mausoleum, connecting eight small chambers, rich in carvings and mosaics with windows on the outer side and on the inner, grilles of marble lacework through which one looks in upon tombs.

Between the outer and the inner archways is a square opening in the marble floor, filled by a flight of marble steps. These lead down into the vault where are the real cenotaphs of pure and plain white marble in which side by side the Imperial lovers sleep.

Thus is it in all Indian tombs. The dead lie always in a vault while the ceremonial cenotaph is in the hall above, and in some cases as in that of Akbar, at Sikandra, it is repeated again on the roof.

As we entered the inner door one of the white-robed Indian guardians—there are always two or three around the tombs—stepped forward to meet us and offered us white sugar plums on a silver plate. This custom was formerly observed in all Indian tombs, and though the tombs were all Mohammedan, the custom seems to be of Hindu origin and similar to that by which in the temples of Southern India all visitors are given flowers.

Coming from the sunlight outside, the interior of the Taj at first seems dim—a soft rich delicious dimness flecked with gold. But soon it brightens and presently we find ourselves in a mellow golden-tinged atmosphere, with a feeling of depth and remoteness and ineffable calm, as if we were down in the sunlit deep of a tropical sea.

The tomb of Mumtaz Mahal occupies the centre of the chamber, while that of Shah Jehan is immediately beside it on the left. Both are of the usual

shape of Mohammedan cenotaphs (a hip-roofed coffin resting on a wider base). That of the Emperor is a little higher. Both are of white marble inlaid with the most perfect Persian jewel mosaic.

Flowers indeed are laid in loving memory on many tombs, or planted there, but no matter how lovingly tended the time comes when they fade and go back to dust. The flowers which bloom on the tomb of Mumtaz Mahal and her lord and lover will never fade. Like the love which strewed them there they are immortal.

The inscription on the tomb of the Emperor we have already quoted. It has little value, having been composed by the false Aurangzib. But that of Mumtaz, which was chosen by Shah Jehan himself, is most touching and beautiful:—

“The illustrious sepulchre of Arjumand Banu Begam, called Mumtaz Mahal. Died in 1040 A.H. (1630 A.D.) He is the Everlasting: He is sufficient. God is He besides whom there is no God. He knoweth what is concealed and what is manifest. He is merciful and compassionate. Nearer unto God are those who say, Our Lord is God!”

The tombs are surrounded by a screen of marble lacework, which is in itself a masterpiece. At first they were enclosed by a grille of gold studded with jewels, but Shah Jehan doubtless realizing that its splendour detracted from the cenotaph itself had it removed and replaced by the present one, which even with all the talent and wealth at his command was the work of years.

The Taj possessed many treasures. Persian silk carpets, lamps and candlesticks of gold. A cushion embroidered with pearls and rubies which had been



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

used by the Empress herself. And above all a sheet of pearls, made by the order of Shah Jehan, which was spread over the tomb of his beloved every Friday. This was carried off by the Amir Husein Ali Khan as his share of the spoil of Agra in 1720, and the remaining precious objects, including the silver doors made by Austin de Bordeaux, were looted by the Jhats in 1764. But one new treasure has been acquired in recent years: a superb lamp of silver gilt, pure Saracenic in design, which was the gift of Lord Curzon. This lamp, executed by the best silversmiths of India, hangs ever burning above the tombs. A touching memorial, an act of piety of a noble heart which God will not forget!

The scheme of the interior decoration of the Taj may be briefly stated as follows: Below are panels carved with Indian lilies in high relief and framed in bands of Persian mosaic. Then arches inlaid with texts from the Koran in black marble, the angles between being filled with flower mosaics in semi-precious stones. Then other arches merely outlined in black which meet the dome. This plan of lightening the decoration as it rises gives an effect of etherealism nowhere equalled in the world. The dome itself is carved throughout with honeycomb work, and is pure ivory-white but for an ornament at its apex, a red flower surrounded by waving black petals like the tassels of a cardinal's hat. As one looks up at it, the tassels seem to wave and then revolve faster and faster and the effect is truly wonderful.

Among the marvels of the Taj are its acoustic properties. "It does not respond to vulgar sounds, but if a few notes be softly and slowly sung and especially if the chord of the seventh be sounded,

they are caught up by the echoes of the roof and repeated in endless harmonies."

In the old days the Mullahs sat behind the marble lattices of the surrounding chambers on Fridays and chanted the Koran, and the musicians played soft Indian and Persian airs while the Emperor knelt in prayer beside the tomb of her, "the crown of his palace," whom he had loved and lost. Then indeed the echoes must have added their voices till the music and the chant seemed like a choir celestial.

Finally, steeped in its beauty, we left the Taj and wandered among the shady alleys and brilliant flower-beds of the garden, looking back at it at every turn until the sun dropped behind the western wall. We had been most fortunate in arriving in Agra on Sunday, for only on that day are the fountains playing in the garden of the Taj. We were more fortunate still in that it was the night of the full moon.

At nine o'clock therefore my husband and I, accompanied by our faithful Rama, returned. The night at that hour was dark, very dark and still, but following the faint shimmer of the canal we reached the lily pond and seated ourselves on the marble bench facing the Taj, where we sat waiting in breathless silence.

First came a glimmer of silver through the trees on our right and slowly, slowly above them rose the moon. The minarets began to sparkle, the apex of the dome to shimmer, and the whole dim outline to emerge from the darkness, and then suddenly the moon was clear of the trees and the Taj stood revealed in a flood of silver light. Like a white swan from

## *INDIAN DREAM LANDS*

its nest of reeds it seemed to rise above the scented dusk of the Indian garden.

As if an unseen hand had drawn aside the curtain of the night and shown us a vision of paradise !

## THE GLORY OF AGRA

**T**HE glory of Agra begins, but does not end with the Taj. Rather, it revolves around it in a circle.

In all times and countries religion has been the mother of architecture as architecture herself is the mother of all the other arts. Each new religion has put forth new flowers of architecture and art. Sometimes these have been grafted on an old tree, as the Saracenic on the Byzantine, but it seems only in India that two already perfected styles have met and combined to form one more perfect still.

This was the starting point of Agra. Apparently everything that the genius of Art could do had been done. And yet here, perhaps alone in the world, the Moghul architects attempted something more. They sought to express in their palaces and tombs the personality of the one for whose dwelling place, whether in life or death, the building was intended.

Thus, as we have already seen, the Taj is imbued with the spirit of Mumtaz Mahal. It is the ideal of feminine beauty, grace and charm. The other masterpieces of Agra were inspired in like manner, and in each the intention has been ably carried out. The idea seems to have originated with Akbar who,

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

having built a Saracenic tomb for his Tartar father, went on building Hindu temples and Indian palaces for his Rajput wife. As we pursue our way through the splendours of Agra, we will find that this desire to express the beloved, whether in life or death, is everywhere. And the more we see and feel it, the more beautiful and wonderful it becomes.

Here is another red fortress built also by Akbar, whose majestic crenulated walls and octagonal towers rise to the height of seventy feet. It stands on the banks of the Jumna, and it and the fort of Delhi are strikingly alike. We drove over the drawbridge and entered the Delhi Gate, a double archway between two octagonal towers; then up a steep slope between red walls to the inner Hathi Pol or Elephant Gate. This latter boasts no longer any elephants indeed, but the marks of their stone feet are still there. They were taken to Delhi long ago by Aurangzib. Two magnificent octagonal red towers guard this entrance whose domed interior, with raised platforms for the soldiers on either side, is very fine.

Inside two roads sweep to the right and left. We followed the one to the right and arrived in front of the high platform on which stands the Moti Masjid (Pearl Mosque). Here we descended from the carriage and mounted the double staircase, finished with a balustrade, lately restored, to the fine red Saracenic Gate.

Well is it for the world at large that the Moham-medans are so fierce in the defence of their religion. Native and foreign conquerors indeed have carried off the Persian carpets and the lamps and candlesticks of gold and silver, but no one, Mahratta or Jhat or English, have dared to injure or destroy the mosques.

Built by Shah Jehan in seven years, 1648 to 1655, we have the Moti Masjid perfect still.

The whole building is faced on the outside with red sandstone, but the moment we have passed the gateway all within is pure and shining white—a marble cloister of exquisite design round three sides of the great courtyard, which is paved with white marble, and in the centre of which is a tank thirty-seven feet square full of sparkling water.

The mosque itself occupies the west side of the quadrangle. It consists of three colonnades of seven arches each, open to the courtyard like all Indian mosques, and surmounted by three pure Saracenic domes. An inscription inlaid in black marble runs along over the pillars of the whole façade, which says that : “The mosque may be likened to a precious pearl, since no other mosque is lined entirely with marble.” At that time the little “Pearl” of Delhi did not exist.

The carvings of the mosque are arabesque, but curved and softened by the magical Persian touch, and enriched with Persian flowers. The whole effect demonstrates the superiority of the “jewel in the casket” idea. No exterior aspect could vie with this interior of pearly whiteness, so perfect, so surpassingly beautiful !

Leaving the shining courtyard with regret we passed on to the palace. Built gradually by three Emperors—Akbar, Jehangir and Shah Jehan—the palace is still of vast extent. None of the buildings have been removed or actually destroyed as at Delhi, but much of what was best has been mutilated and despoiled, not by a rude and ignorant soldiery this time, not even by careless and inconsiderate officers,

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

but by a Viceroy of India, Lord William Bentinck ! This personage held the position of which he was so unworthy from 1828 till 1835. It is true that Suttees were abolished during his régime, but not at his instance, but at that of the Maharajah Ram Mohum Roy. What he did of his own inspiration was to take a great quantity of the marble lacework and jewel flower mosaics out of the Agra palace and sell them at auction ! Happily, most happily, the sale was a failure, for otherwise Lord William was determined, and had made a proposal to the British Government to that effect, to demolish the Taj and sell the fragments. Not even was the barbarian in any way deterred by the fact that the Taj was a tomb. He may have possessed good qualities with which we are unacquainted, and he is long since dead, but I am glad that we were not contemporaries, for though I have no experience in bomb-throwing, my temptation would have been very great.

Mumtaz Mahal in her life was most merciful ; she made use of her influence over the Emperor to obtain the pardon of criminals condemned to death, and many, many were the lives which she "gave back." Good deeds are never lost. God would not permit the desecration of her tomb, and now once more it is tended with loving care and illumined by an ever burning lamp !

But to return to the palace—my thoughts are ever apt to stray back to the Taj. After leaving the Moti Masjid, we passed on the left a ruinous pile of buildings, the oldest part of the palace, built by Akbar, who it will be remembered began the fortress in 1566. The old gate which leads into the courtyard is believed to be the "*Dersane Darwaza*," on the

## THE GLORY OF AGRA

rampart of which Jehanghir showed himself to his nobles and people every morning at sunrise.

At every moment indeed, one treads in the foot-prints of the Moghuls in the palace and fort of Agra, which adds an intensely human interest to all the rest. But, I must say, this always seemed to me an uncomfortable habit of Jehangir's. Early rising is considered advantageous for the birds, but the situation is fraught with difficulties for the worms who must always be up first.

We came next to the old Mina Bazaar, which in the days of the Moghuls was filled with Indian and foreign merchants, who occupied the shops and sold their jewels and silks and gold brocades to the nobles of the Court. Then a centre of life and wealth and enterprise, but all silent and empty now.

From this a gateway leads into the first courtyard of the palace, in which is situated the Divan-i-Am, or public audience hall. This courtyard which is surrounded by arcades built by Akbar has been as far as possible restored to its original condition by the untiring interest and care of Lord Curzon. The Divan-i-Am itself, which was begun by Shah Jchan and finished by Aurangzib, was unfortunately very badly restored in 1876 by Sir John Strachy, Governor of the North-West Provinces. Like all these Divans, it consists of an open pavilion formed by a triple row of colonnades and only closed at the back by the wall of the palace. Built of red sandstone, it was originally plastered over with a fine white stucco, frescoed in gold and colours in Persian design. Stucco work was one of the many arts brought to perfection by the old Moghul builders. This style lacked the imposing strength and vigour of the pure



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

carved red stone, as in the Divan of Delhi, and showed a softening of Indian Saracenic art, presaging its decline, but it must have been wonderfully rich and beautiful. At present, restored with ordinary modern stucco and decorated with what looks like a stencil pattern of blue and gold, the whole original effect is lost and it suggests nothing but a London music-hall. To add to its everyday aspect, in front of it stands the tomb of Mr. John Russell Colvin, carried out in the railway station style of architecture which prevails in Bombay. Had Lord Curzon remained in India all this would have been different!

The Imperial throne was in an alcove connected with the private apartments, behind and on either side were chambers through whose marble grilles the ladies of the Zenana could watch the Durbar. At the base of the alcove, which is raised several feet, is a marble slab three feet above the floor, on which the ministers used to stand to present petitions. These in turn were handed them by who ever had one to make, for here the Emperor held his Durbar every morning, and the Durbar was open to all.

The most interesting object now left in the court of the Divan is an immense stone cistern cut out of a single block with steps inside and out. This was made for Jehangir and is known as his "haug" (bath tub or bowl). The Persian inscription which surrounded the rim is almost effaced, only the date 1019 A.H. (1611 A.D.) remains.

From the Divan-i-Am one ascends by a small staircase to the upper arcade of the royal apartments, the lower one being impassable, which surround the Machhi Bhawan or Fish Square. This courtyard has suffered so much from the spoliation of Lord

William Bentinck, and perhaps other vandals besides, that but little remains to tell the tale of its former splendour. In other days it was laid out in geometrical beds of flowers with canals and fish-ponds between, but all these are now no more.

Picking our way among the debris we arrived at that part of the palace which was once the Zenana. Most of this has escaped, at least in part, the vandalism which ruined the rest. The Marquis of Hastings, when Governor, indeed broke up the most beautiful of the baths and sent it home as a present to George IV. But Lord Curzon has done everything in his power to save and restore what remains. If his name recurs like a chorus in these pages it is but a faint echo of the tribute which he deserves.

The first building which we reach is the Divan-i-Khass, the private audience hall, which stands between the Machhi Bhawan and the Zenana, of which it architecturally forms a part. Built by Shah Jehan in 1637, it stands on a high terrace of white marble overlooking the Jumna. Similar in design, it is smaller and lighter than the Divan-i-Khass at Delhi, but not less beautiful. Entirely constructed of shining white marble its decoration consists of carving and flower mosaic. To quote from one who expresses the idea to perfection: "Most of the decorative work of these marble pavilions is derived directly from Persian art, and inspired by the Persian love of flowers which almost amounted to flower worship. The designer has naively translated into marble the conventional Indian flower-beds just as they were in every palace garden, but there is perfect art in the absence of all artifice."

On the terrace in front of the Divan-i-Khass stand

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

two thrones, one of white marble which faces the Fish Square, the other of black slate facing the river. The former was the throne of Akbar, probably used when he held a smaller Court than that of the Divan-i-Am. The latter, as its Persian inscription relates, was erected in 1603 for Jehangir. As this was two years before the death of Akbar it doubtless commemorates his recognition of Jehangir as his heir.

Afterwards this black throne became a favourite seat of the new Emperor, from which he used to watch the elephant fights in the space below the walls, or follow the movements of his fleet on the river.

As we see it now, the throne is sprung in two by a long fissure which, as tradition relates, opened and spurted blood when the Jhat Rajah of Bharatpur took Agra in 1763 and dared to seat himself on the throne of the great Moghul. Truly, there are two red stains on the slate which I have seen myself. But retribution swiftly overtook the impious Jawahar Singh, who was assassinated soon afterwards in the palace which he had profaned.

A small door at the back of the Divan-i-Khass opens on a short flight of steps, which lead down into the private apartment of the Empress. Descending, we find ourselves in the little courtyard of the Samman Burj, the Jasmine Tower!

All things come to him—or her—who will but wait. One thinks and dreams for years of something, one loves it as a thing of the imagination and only half believes that it has an existence in reality. And then at last one descends a little staircase, a few steps of white marble and one is there. Oh, the Jasmine

Tower! Hanging like a bird's nest on the red bastion of the fort above the Jumna, perfect, thank God, perfect still, in spite of all the storms which have swept over it.

What charm has preserved it, what spell of enchantment? The Jhat has not dared to enter here. No British soldier has defaced, no Viceroy despoiled it. It is as it was when Jehangir built it for Noor Jehan; when Shah Jehan made it the bower of love of his Arjumand Banu; and when he died here at last in the arms of Jehanara, his eyes fixed upon the Taj Mahal! Surely the spell that has guarded it so long and so well is the enchantment of love.

I remember as a child lying in bed looking up at a ceiling painted in an attempt at arabesques with bright geometrical flowers, looking and looking and trying to pick up the threads of memory. And always I am dreaming of an octagonal room at the corner of the palace, whose walls are festooned with flowers. Was it the Jasmine Tower that I remembered?

Small it all is, courtyard and tower alike. Small for an Imperial apartment. But pearls and rubies also are not large. And love needs no wide halls and chambers in which to hold its court, but only a bower, a nest. The little court is divided by a high step which raises the part beyond the tower itself, which stands in a corner of the wall, and is enclosed on its two outer sides by an exquisite screen of marble lace-work of honeycomb design. The upper part is paved with squares of black and white marble, while the lower one is white inlaid with the cross-line of a parchesi board in black. On one the Emperor and Empress played chess or draughts, on the other

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

Parchesi, the slaves of the Empress being the pieces in the games.

The tower itself, which stands entirely on the bastion, consists of but two rooms: the first is open in front to the court, the roof supported by two pillars and two half pillars with peacock-tail bases, honeycombed capitols and winged brackets, the whole inlaid with a Persian flower-mosaic in semi-precious stones.

The whole scheme of decoration indeed is Persian, and probably marks the introduction of the flower-mosaic into Indian architecture. Noor Jehan was a Persian, and the tower was built for her. The dado, white marble, like all the rest, is carved with flowers and surrounded by a border of mosaic. And all the upper part of the walls are cut in little niches of Persian shapes: flower vases, wine cups, rose water sprinklers and eight pointed stars, between which run borders of mosaic, which also surround the doors which open on the balcony and into the second chamber. The floor is of pure white marble, and in the centre is a square basin inlaid with jewelled flowers, which was in other days the rose-water fountain.

The second chamber, which was the bedroom of the Empress, is octagonal and surrounded by a veranda of pillars and arches, one of the lightest and most exquisite examples of Indian Saracenic art. Both chamber and veranda are entirely inlaid with Persian jewel mosaic. Truly the Jasmine Tower expresses its name, for it is a bower of unfading and immortal flowers.

The whole tower is surrounded by a balcony protected by a balustrade of marble lacework in

geometrical design, like the wax of a honeycomb. And the octagonal chamber is crowned with an airy cupola to which one ascends by a staircase in the wall. An open-air dwelling it is, but in other days its arches were hung with curtains of gold brocade which could be drawn at will. Its marble floors were spread with Persian rugs and heaped with silken cushions, while at night it was illuminated with perfumed oil burning in golden lamps.

I have seen a picture—an old Persian painting—of the Empress Noor Jehan sitting in a rich costume on her bed, a high-posted structure of some precious wood with canopy and curtains of green and gold brocade, placed in the centre of this octagonal room.

We sat for a long time on the balcony looking across the river to the Taj, which shone like a pearl against its rich background of dark cypresses and tropical green, and thinking of *the past*, the glorious past, when all was splendid here: a true Empire in which the people were ruled like children by a father and shared the prosperity of their Sovereign and his Court; when Empresses sat here where we were sitting—Empresses beautiful and young and chaste and wise, their royal lovers by their side; when the slaves moved about on the parchesi and chess boards shining with silk and gold, and the royal children played around the rose-water fountain—the royal children, the bright little brothers and sisters who were destined to act such a direful tragedy—Dara, Mahmoud, Sujah, Aurangzib, Jehanara, Rushanara; and the last scene of all, when the dead Shah Jehan was laid in his sandalwood coffin and hastily and silently carried for the last time out of the Jasmine

Tower and down to the water gate, where he was rowed across the Jumna to rejoin his beloved.

The green paraqueets chattered joyously in the trees around us, the descendants of those who built their nests here then. Lord Curzon has even found some of the descendants of the masons who built this palace, to carry out its restoration. Things begin in this world, but nothing really ends, and to enjoy and understand the present we should keep always with us the memory of the past.

Opposite the Jasmine Tower and under the Divan-i-Khass are the royal baths. As we see them now they consist of two great half underground chambers, the hot and cold water tanks of which are still extant. But the mosaic of the walls and the mirror work of the ceiling have been wantonly and cruelly mutilated and half destroyed.

Beyond all this to the right is the great courtyard of the Zenana—the Anguri Bagh—"Grape Garden," as the name signifies, but whose grape arbours have long since passed away. By the kindness of Lord Curzon they have been replaced by beds of flowers which surround the marble tank raised on a platform which was the Zenana summer bath.

On the east side of this courtyard along the Jumna is the Khass Mahal, which contained the private apartments of Shah Jehan. This is a building of white marble with a wall in which are marble lattices along the river-side, an open pillared hall in the centre and a closed room on either side. Exquisite in its proportion and design, it is enriched with carvings and mosaics, and in the open hall are niches which once held the portraits of the Moghul Emperors, beginning with Timour.

## THE GLORY OF AGRA

On either side of the Khass Mahal are two marble pavilions, copies of it in miniature, the Kiosks of the Princesses—another memory—the abodes in their youth of Jehanara and Rushanara. One might say of virtue and of vice.

On the south side of the Anguri Bagh is what is called the Jhangiri Mahal, though this part of the palace was built by Akbar. Fronting on the garden is a suite of three rooms in the Arab fashion, a long narrow one in the middle with a small square one at each end—the rooms which Noor Jehan occupied as a bride while the Jasmine Tower was being built for her.

At the end of this suite is a tower from which apparently the Jasmine Tower was copied, except that this is of red stone—the tower in which Akbar held his midnight interviews with the Brahmins, who were drawn up to it in a basket from boats on the river.

It is said that Akbar at that time also occupied this suite of rooms, but as the entire interior decoration of both rooms and tower, now much mutilated and defaced, is Persian *Gesso* on a gold ground, they were doubtless re-decorated by Jhangir for his Persian Noor Mahal. The borders, which were beyond the reach of the spoilers, are still very beautiful.

In the south-west corner of the Anguri Bagh is what would be a comedy were it not a tragedy. Here, in a small apartment are displayed a pair of gates of Deodar wood richly carved, which were torn from the tomb of the first Mohammedan conqueror of India, Mahmud of Ghazni, when the English captured that city in the Afghan War in 1842. What grudge the British Commander had against Mahmud is hard to



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

understand that he should have despoiled his tomb? But apparently the Viceroy of the moment, Lord Ellenborough, wished to please the Hindus at somebody else's expense and so Mahmoud was punished for conquering India. An old tradition was raked up to the effect that Mahmoud had carried off the gates of the great Hindu temple of Somnath and made use of them for his own tomb. Whether he accomplished this exploit before or after his death is not stated. Leaving out the impossibility of transporting a pair of gates of this size across the Himalayas in the eleventh century, the Somnath gates were of sandalwood, and the carving on these is unmistakably Moslem in design and Afghan in workmanship. Never by any possibility could they have belonged to a Hindu temple. Nevertheless, the Viceroy issued a proclamation resplendent with adjectives, in which he announced to the people of Hindustan that these were the gates of Somnath and that "the insult of eight hundred years had been avenged." The gates were then conveyed on a triumphal car through the towns of Northern India and finally brought here to the Agra palace, and placed among the ruins which later conquerors of India have made. They face the courtyard from which the marble lattices of the grape arbours were torn to swell Lord William Bentinck's auction sale. The parallel does not seem to have struck Lord Ellenborough.

Beyond the suite of Noor Mahal is a long room called the library, in which an unfortunate attempt has been made to restore the frescoes on the walls.

Beyond these apartments are two more courtyards. The outer one on the river is beautiful, its gem being a porch, the motive of which is Saracenic,

though with an Indian tinge. But the inner one is most beautiful and some authorities consider it the masterpiece of the palace. Indian it is, and Indian at its climax. It was built for Akbar by the same architects who built Fatehpur Sikri, whose art has here attained its perfection. All of sandstone, glowing with life and vigour in the sunlight, it was the palace of Moti Mahal. Here as at Fatehpur she had her temple of Shiva. Here it was that Jehangir brought and committed to her care the widowed Noor Mahal, who spent here those four long years till she overcame the past and consented to become the Empress of India.

As I understand Indian architecture less than Indian Saracenic and fear not to do it justice, I will quote from the one who I think understands it best, Ernest B. Havell, A.R.C.A.

“The beauty of this inner quadrangle is derived not so much from its fine proportions and rich ornamentation, as from the wonderful rhythmic play of light and shadow, produced by the bracket form of construction and the admirable disposition of the openings for doors, windows and colonnades. The north side of the quadrangle is formed by a pillared hall of distinctly Hindu design, full of the feeling of mystery characteristic of Indian styles. The subdued light of the interior adds to the impressiveness of its great piers stretching their giant brackets up to the roof like the gnarled and twisted branches of primeval forest trees.”

Between this part of the palace and the Divan-i-Am was an older palace called the Salimgar, of which now only a two-storied pavilion, richly carved, remains. Saracenic in style this building is often

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

attributed to Jehangir, whose real name it will be remembered was Selim. But it is more likely that it was built by Selim Shah Sur, the last of the Persian Sultans, as it is well known that Akbar built the fortress on the site of an old Persian stronghold.

Once more we return to the Divan-i-Am; the palace is not finished, but it has given us so many emotions that we will leave the rest for another day. Once more the vast empty courtyard lies before us, but now after all that we have seen and felt it seems filled and peopled. On the raised dais of the Divan-i-Am the Moghul Emperor is holding his Durbar. Around him are the royal princes, the fan-bearers and officials. The nobles occupy the space below enclosed in silver rails, while the courtyard is filled by the people—the Indian people representing so many races and religions, but all united here, the children of one Imperial father.

Every day they came, some to present petitions, but the most only to see and revel in the splendour of the Durbar. And every day another spectacle was offered them, a procession of the royal animals, which were led past the Emperor that he might assure himself that they were well cared for and in good condition. First came the horses, then the elephants, all gorgeously caparisoned. Then other animals, antelopes, grey oxen, buffaloes, rhinoceroses, tame leopards and panthers, the hunting dogs of various breeds, and lesser birds of prey, trained for the chase, as hawks and falcons.

On festival days the display was even more magnificent, for then not only the Divan-i-Am but the surrounding arcades were hung with cloth of gold and rich brocades, and spread with Persian carpets.

each of the nobles decorating one compartment with treasures of his own and each vying with the others. No wonder that the people delighted in these sights and came to gaze on them from far and near.\* The Hindu is an Aryan like the Romans and ourselves, and like both of us loves "circuses" as much as bread or more!

Was it worth while that all this brilliant life should cease that strangers might divide its spoils; that this great Indian Empire should become a conquered province only that the King of a far distant island might call it his; that his nobles might find places for their younger sons and his tradesmen a new market for their wares? Such things have happened on a lesser scale before, but, as the great historian who has bridged the gulf between the old world and the new says truly: "The gain is never equal to the loss." But,—God has permitted it. "The wisdom of God is not as the wisdom of man!"—And we can only say with the Moslems: "*Insha! Allah!*"

\* For a detailed account of the splendour and ceremonies of the Moghul Court, see Bernier's "Memoirs."

## XXI

### THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS

**D**ELHI and Agra are like a fairy-book, which once opened one might turn the illuminated pages for ever, and with ever new delight. But life, alas, is short and time is fleeting! No matter how many flowers bloom along our pathway we may only gather a few and pass on.

The next day we returned to the palace and wandered again through its glorious solitude, but this time when we reached the Machhi Bhawan we turned to the left into the inner Mina Bazaar—a unique feature of the palace, since it was actually the private bazaar of the Imperial Zenana. It is a courtyard enclosed in an arcade of red sandstone, Indian Saracenic arches with alternating hexagonal and fluted columns between. At one end is an upper story or rather gallery of white marble, an exquisite three-arched pavilion connected with the apartments of the palace on each side by a passage enclosed in screens of marble lace-work of honeycomb design, a gem, even in that mine of jewels.

In this gallery, approached by a narrow staircase from below, the ladies of the Zenana sat looking down into the bazaar, of which every archway was then a shop filled with silks, jewels and perfumes.

Some writers say that their slaves descended and brought them up armfuls of things from which to choose, and the gallery supports their testimony. But sometimes we know the merchants were all turned out and the royal ladies assisted by the wives and daughters of the nobility held the bazaar themselves—a real charity bazaar at which the Emperor and the princes assisted, and the proceeds of which were used for benevolent purposes.

The Mina Bazaar was built by Akbar, and at its further corner are the Chitore Gates which he brought away as a trophy of his capture of that great Rajput fortress in 1557.

Mounting the little staircase to the marble gallery we passed behind the screens into the little courtyard, a story above the ground, of the Najina Masjid (Gem Mosque).

This was the oratory of Akbar and speaks eloquently for his pure majestic taste. Like the Little Pearl it is built in three arches surmounted by three pineapple domes, but it is much more simple, one might almost say severe. With its courtyard enclosed in screens of lacework it is all of shining white marble polished like glass, and while the Moti Masjid shines with the soft effulgence of the pearl, the Najina makes the clear cut effect of a burnished gem. Names, like architecture, expressed what they represented under the Moghul dynasty.

Opening from a corner of the Najina court are two small chambers with bare brick walls, one now without a roof, overlooking the Divan-i-Am. These the guides tell us are the rooms occupied by Shah Jehan and Jehanara, and which together with the Najina formed their entire residence during the seven

years of their captivity. Myself, I doubt it, and the tradition does not rest on any reliable authority.

On the other side of the Mina Bazaar and beyond the Chitore gates one comes unexpectedly upon a Hindu temple, the second which the palace contains, the first being in the apartments of Moti Mahal. This building, which is merely a courtyard surrounded by arcades of grey stone in late Indian architecture, was built in the middle of the eighteenth century by a Rajah of Bharatpur. This marks the change of Agra's sovereignty from Moslem back to Hindu, and may be styled the last chapter of the palace of Agra.

From the Red Fortress, holding the white palace in its embrace as an oyster holds a pearl, from this living memorial of the great Akbar, let us turn our steps to Sikandra and pay our last tribute at his tomb.

About five miles from Agra lies the small village of Sikandra, and beside it in an immense garden the great Akbar began to build his own tomb which he had himself designed. The garden itself is enclosed by tremendous walls pierced by four gates, each seventy feet in height. The principal one of these is surmounted by four minarets, between which lies the Nakbar Khana, an arcaded chamber in which every morning at sunrise in the Moghul times the drums and fifes were sounded in honour of the dead.

This gate, built of red sandstone, is ornamented with inlaid work of Persian design in white marble, very spirited but not quite perfect, as though the Indian masons had not yet quite mastered the art. Over the entrance is a Persian inscription which states that the tomb was completed by the Emperor Jehangir in the seventh year of his reign (1613 A.D.). A Persian inscription for a Tartar emperor of India!

## THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS

One had no need to read the text to know that Akbar was no more, and that Jehangir was king—and Noor Jehan queen.

The tomb itself is most imposing, but different from any other Moghul monument, and original as Akbar himself. Built in four stories, each one smaller than the one below, it seemed to me like what the Mexican pyramids must have been. The three lower stories are of red sandstone, the fourth of white marble. Most of the interior decoration has disappeared. Only the vestibule is as it was, richly ornamented with stucco work of arabesque design coloured in blue and gold. From this vestibule an inclined passage leads down into a high vault dimly lit from above, where in a sarcophagus of white marble, superbly simple, the great Akbar sleeps.

This sarcophagus is repeated in different forms on each floor till its greatest glory and that of the tomb is attained on the roof. This, which is just half the size of the base is paved with squares of black and white marble and enclosed in a marble cloister, whose outer arches are filled with lace-work screens. In the centre of this courtyard, as it seems, on a large raised platform of black and white marble is a solid block of white, exquisitely carved with sacred texts and flowers. Like the real sarcophagus and its counterparts it faces, not towards Mecca, like all Moslem tombs, but towards the rising sun.

At the head of the marble cenotaph is carved *Allah-o-Akbar* (God is great), and at the foot *Jalli Jalalohu* (magnificent is his glory), the motto of the Din-i-Ilahi; and along the sides, the ninety-nine Moslem names of God.



The cenotaph, so the Moghul writers affirm, was to have been covered by a canopy of speckled black and white marble ceiled with sheets of pure gold. Why this design was not carried out we do not know, for Jehangir lacked neither wealth nor filial piety. But it is well that it was not. The gold and perhaps the precious marble had long since been the prey of rapacious conquerors. The greatest of the Moghul Emperors sleeps under the most glorious of all canopies, which none can change or spoil—the blue Indian sky, gilded with sunlight or spangled with silver stars!

Reluctantly we left the mausoleum and walked through the long wild grass of the once tenderly-cared for Tartar garden and out of the southern gate. There by the river we came to the Kanch Mahal, the perfect little garden-house of which we have already spoken, the summer-day nest of Jehangir and Noor Jehan. This is one of the finest examples of Moghul domestic architecture extant. Two stories high, it consists of four rooms on each floor, with hall and staircase in the middle, and is so small that in modern times it would be called a villa. It is indeed not a palace but a kiosk. Pure Persian in design, it is built of light stone elaborately and delicately carved and richly inlaid with precious old blue Persian tiles. All around it were once rows of cypresses, bouquets of flowering trees and geometrical beds of brilliant flowers; it is now in a wild tangle of tropical green. Wild and neglected, it is the garden of memories!

Standing on one of its balconies and looking back at the towering walls which surround the tomb of Akbar, the great spreading trees and luxuriant under-

growth, and listening to the soft deep murmur of the Jumna, it was as if we lived again in some Persian fairy-tale! And it seemed as though the sunlight which bathed the landscape in a flood of molten gold was "the light of other days."

Driving back to Agra through scenes which were one picture after another, one more than all the rest engraved itself on my memory: an Indian picture which, had one seen it one, two or three thousand years ago, had been just the same. An old round well, with a wooden bucket suspended over it, and raised upon a platform of grey stone. Beside it a beautiful young woman swathed in an Indian drapery of red and gold which was both robe and veil. Her arms were covered to the elbows with bracelets, brass or gold? With the right she held a naked baby of a year, and with the left a chiselled and brightly burnished brass jar. And beside her stood another little naked boy of three or four. We stopped to watch her. Two hands were necessary for her task. She first handed the baby to the little boy, and then setting down her jar began to unroll the rope and let the bucket down into the well. The baby-boy did his best to hold the other baby, which in turn tried to clasp its little arms around his neck. But there was nothing to hold on to, it was like trying to hold a raw oyster. The struggle continued while the young mother filled her jar. It was a battle of love, and love conquered, for the baby did not fall. Then she took it on her arm again and poising her shining jar on her left hip she walked away in the red sunset through the red dust of the road, a flash of red and gold.

The next day we visited the tomb of Itimad-ed-

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

Dowlah, or by his real name—for all this family changed their names on entering the Moghul Court—Mirza Ghias, the father of Noor Mahal.

This eminently fortunate and romantic personage lies buried in a lovely garden on the left bank of the Jumna, to reach which it is necessary to cross the Pal pontoon-bridge. To all these tombs I went, not as a tourist seeing sights, but rather as a pilgrim visiting shrines. The tomb of Mirza seemed to me an especially sacred place, for though, as has been truly said, it expresses the distinguished and cultivated scholar to whom it was erected, to me it expresses still more the love and filial piety of the Empress Noor Jehan for her father and mother—for the mother whose love twice gave her life, sleeps there as well.

A high wall of red sandstone with romantic kiosks along its edge encloses the garden, and though the canals which intersect it are dry, because the British Government will not pay for the water to fill them, the grass is green and the rich trees and shrubs still give it an air of soft and well-tended luxuriance.

The tomb, which stands on a square island surrounded by a marble canal, is a building as remarkable as it is wonderful in beauty, for it marks the introduction of Persian architecture and Persian decoration in *pietra dura* into India. The ground floor is flanked by four octagonal towers surmounted by airy cupolas. On the first roof, or rather terrace, enclosed by marble railings is a square pavilion, in which the only Indian note occurs, since it is furnished with a broad-eaved Indian roof, whereas Saracenic and Persian tombs are surmounted by a dome. The whole building is of ivory white marble,

inlaid all over, not with semi-precious stones like the Taj and the Jasmine Tower, but with soft coloured marbles, the whole effect being indescribably soft, rich and beautiful. Nor are the designs of the mosaic merely floral, as in the later examples. Here we find all the motifs of pure Persian art, the symbols each one of which have such a deep meaning. The tree of life, the cypress, flower vases, wine cups, fruits and rose water flacons. It is the tribute of the Indian Empress to the learning and cultivation of her Persian father.

Itimad-ed-Dowlah and his wife sleep side by side in the central chamber, while two of his brothers and other members of the family are buried in the corner towers. The pavilion on the roof, which is enclosed by exquisite screens of marble lacework, contains replicas of the tombs of the Empress's parents, bearing their names. The floor is a magnificent mosaic of coloured marbles like one great Persian carpet. The love which called the mausoleum into being has left nothing uncared for or undone.

Doubtless to this cool rich chamber, with the sunlight glinting through its marble lattices, came every Friday the beautiful wise Noor Jehan, leaving the Court and its whirl of splendour behind her to pray for and commune with her beloved dead.

We lingered while we could in this beautiful poetical kiosk, this tomb which seems so full of life! We lingered in the cool green garden, and at length tearing ourselves away we reached the river and turned back for one last look. The sun was low, and in the evening light the mausoleum with all its soft bright play of colour shone against its dark background of cypresses like an opal in a setting of

emeralds—a tender and unfading idyll of beauty and repose.

Fathepur Sikri gave us our last impression of the glory of the Moghul Empire. To this strange, wonderful city, this capital of seventeen years, built and abandoned at a hermit's wish, we drove along that famous road, begun by Babar and finished by Akbar, which leads from Agra to Kabul. Bordered through its whole length with splendid, wide spreading trees, one may drive from one capital to the other through this land of sunlight, always in the shade.

Had the Moghuls conceived and executed nothing else but this alone, they would be remembered. And as if to accentuate its origin, all along this royal route unfolds itself the whole Moslem heart of India. From one side to the other one turns to look at pictures of which one who loves the Orient has always dreamed. But as usual, time is too short, and the deserted red capital is reached all too soon.

We stopped at the dak bungalow outside the high red walls and entered, as one must now, on foot. First there is an immense square bordered by buildings. At one side the Divan-i-Am, a long open building of red stone and brick, behind which lie the palaces. Slipping through a private door, sacred once to royalty, we found ourselves among them stretching out in a long red vista on their carpet of red sand. Once there were gardens here and spreading trees, so that the red palaces glowed softly like rich jewels among the green. But now the desert has re-conquered its own and all is red, with only the deep blue sky overhead. All red repose, in the sunlit mysterious silence of an enchanted city.

A lesson, a revelation in architecture it is indeed.

For here we find Indian architecture nursed and brought to perfection by Akbar. But who shall describe it as it is? Not I, since I cannot do it worthily and would not unworthily. For me it is too overwhelming, this blood-red art of India.

One palace built, I think, five stories high, and rich in fiery carvings reminded me of what were or must have been the terrace temples of ancient Egypt. Each story of this building, which is called the Pansh Mahal, is enclosed in screens of lacework, and the lower floor is divided into small compartments—the whole construction being very curious. It is sometimes called the School of the Princesses, while some authorities believe it to have been the nursery of the royal children.

In all these palaces Akbar gave his rich fancy full play. There is the Naubat Khana, or House of the Musicians, built over the inner gate. There is the Mint whose domes are interesting, as they are perhaps the first real radiating domes in India. There is the Ankh Michauli, which, as the legend goes, was a playhouse in which the Emperor and his Zenana amused themselves with Blind Man's Buff. But the most curious of all is the Divan-i-Khass.

This is a square and dignified building of red stone, like all the others. Apparently two-storied from the outside, but really only of one, a graceful gallery supported on brackets encircling it under the second tier of windows. The extraordinary and unique part of its construction is a magnificent carved column with immense bracket capital, standing alone in the centre of the chamber, surmounted by a platform enclosed by a richly carved balustrade connected by three narrow bridges with the surrounding gallery.

Here, on this platform, Akbar sat while his ministers and officials filled the gallery, and those to whom he was granting audience occupied the floor below. There is certainly nothing like it anywhere else in the world, and I am sure that Akbar must have designed it himself.

The gem of the Zenana is the Palace of Jodh Bai (Moti Mahal). This, unlike most of the Indian palaces, which consist principally of open arcades, is solidly built of rich, deeply glowing red stones, two stories high, with large and small rooms, corridors, windows and balconies. It would indeed be perfectly adaptable as a European residence. It is built in a quadrangle around the courtyard, its fine gateway flanked by a guard-house, and opposite the entrance, in the centre of the western wall, is the Temple of Shiva, to which reference has already been made.

The design and the carvings of the decorations, much of which shows Jain influence, are very rich and dignified, but much less florid than those of the other Zenana buildings. The whole palace, which is still in a state of almost perfect preservation, is a model of good taste.

It was formerly connected by a covered passage with the private apartments of Akbar and by a similar one with the gardens of the Zenana, but both of these structures have been removed. A little distance beyond is a much smaller but very beautiful and rich palace, consisting of four rooms below and three above, the remaining angle of the upper story being arranged as a balcony. This palace is known by different names, all incorrect. But it was evidently the residence of another of Akbar's wives. Beyond this beautiful little palace the road leads past a group





known as that of the Brahmin in the private apartments of Akbar. Jain sculpture and Persian painting might creep into the Zenana and find a foothold there, but here, the chisel dared not swerve from the lines prescribed by the Koran. Here the eye and the heart turned only towards Mecca, for here it was neither Emperor nor Empress who reigned, but Sheikh Selim Chisti, under whose eagle eye and overwhelming religious fervour the heir of India, Jehangir, was brought up to look neither right nor left, but to follow the straight path of Islam.

The Jama Masjid (Cathedral Mosque) which glorifies the spot, is enclosed in a large courtyard shut in by high walls and red arcades. The gate to this enclosure, the Baland Darwaza, is a magnificent building in itself; one hundred and seventy-six feet high, it stands on a platform, from which splendid steps descend on three sides like a red cascade. Hexagonal in shape, it has a great gateway in the centre and a small one on each side. Over this latter are the following celebrated inscriptions. On that to the right, after relating the conquest of the Deccan :

“Saith Jesus, on Whom be peace! The world is a bridge, pass over it, but build no house there. He, who hoped for an hour, may hope for eternity; the world is but an hour, spend it in devotion, the rest is worth nothing.”

Over the left doorway :

“He that standeth up in prayer and his heart is not in it, does not draw nigh to God, but remaineth far from Him. Thy best possession is what thou givest in the name of God, thy best traffic in selling this world for the next.”

## THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS

Entering the vast courtyard one sees at its end the mosque said to be copied from one at Mecca, and one of the most glorious monuments of Akbar. Unlike any other mosque which I know, it consists of three chapels, each crowned with a dome, between which are noble colonnades which stretch away in endless vistas from the sunlight outside to the dusk at the farther end—a wonderful effect which thrills the imagination and touches the heart with its rare and mysterious charm.

Amid all this red blaze of splendour the white tomb of Selim Chisti, which stands to the right of the mosque, enclosed in screens of marble lace-work with a portico of marble columns, polished like glass, shines like a silver shrine. Inside, the saint sleeps his last sleep in a cenotaph under a canopy like that of a four-posted bed, both of precious wood entirely inlaid with tortoiseshell and pearl.

Barren women, both Mohammedans and Hindus, come here to ask the intercession of the saint, and each one ties a coloured thread into the marble lace-work of the screens as a token that if she is blessed with a child she will make an offering at the shrine.

In a little cemetery behind the tomb is buried Shaik Selim's infant son, who gave his life for that of Jehangir. In a large but rather plain mausoleum close by lies his grandson, Nawab Islam Khan, whom Jehangir made Governor of Bengal; and the women of the saint's family are buried in another tomb called the Zenana Ranza.

Some distance beyond is a small mosque called the Stone-cutter's Mosque, which was built by the quarrymen in honour of the saint before he was known to the Emperor or had made his début in

history. Near by, a palace, now half in ruins, has been built over the cave, which was the birthplace of Jehangir. It is still occupied by a lineal descendant of Sheikh Selim Chisti.

There is much more to look at and to wonder! But time, as it always seemed in India, was too short. Reluctantly, as always, we retraced our steps between the Silent Palaces, and suddenly, as always here, the blue curtain of the night dropped down over the red city of Fathepur Sikri.

On the morning of our last day in Agra we paid our farewell visit to the Taj. We had seen it at all hours and in all lights. But I could never make up my mind at which time it was most beautiful. Leaving it at last we took a beautiful and shady walk in the garden, and as we went through the archway I kissed my hand to it and took my last look.

And even that was not the last, for the next morning as we were leaving for Benares the train made an unexpected turn, and suddenly there appeared once more, as always, and therefore I repeat it many times, like a vision of enchantment, the Taj Mahal. White and glorious it floated once more on the banks of the Jumna and then disappeared as suddenly as it had been revealed.

THE ENGLISH  
IN INDIA

**N**OTHING could be more unjust than to confuse the English as individuals with the English Government, or to hold them responsible for the foreign policy of England. There are no people in the world more honourable, more intelligent, more sincere than the English, and none who make truer or more lasting friends.

They have their faults and failings, since nothing may be perfect in this world, but these are almost invariably sins of omission arising from their unique and, until the invention of steam, rather isolated position; not sins of commission. Also, it must be remembered that the majority of English people remain at home. Many, indeed, have never even seen a warship of their own fleet, which gives them the empire of the sea. And most of their possessions are far away.

English optimism, the fruit of centuries of conquest and success, must also be taken into consideration. Therefore, it is not surprising that the average Englishman believes that "all is well" in India, and considers the British conquest the greatest and most unmixed blessing that has or could have happened

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

to that wonderful country, which he will never either see or understand.

Of the English who are in India, some understand. These are the heroes who are devoting their lives to the service and the welfare of these lands, so strange, perhaps even so unsympathetic to their own personal and hereditary ideas. The others, the mere onlookers, or those who fill positions and draw their salaries and therewith, "basta," do not, cannot, or will not understand. The former are the men who have made and, if they are allowed to do so, will hold together the Indian Empire. The latter are the butterflies, who drink the honey from the Indian flowers and fly away home. But no matter to which class they belong, they are all charming and intelligent in their different ways. Their hospitality is sincere and unlimited, and they make India the most delightful winter sojourn in the world.

I trust, therefore that no one will misunderstand what I am going to say about British rule in India. Those who have taught me what I know about it will endorse my observations, and to the others, who have not learned or thought about it for themselves, they will make no difference.

I love England, and am happy in having many English friends, and therefore I regret that those who steer the English ship of State should ever fail in their duty to the nation or ever make mistakes.

England claims, and with reason; to have given good government to India; she claims to have given to India justice and peace; she claims to have improved the country; she claims to have improved the

condition of the people of India. We will consider each of these claims in succession.

A foreign rule is seldom acceptable to a conquered people, but there are instances in history where it has been not only acceptable, but preferred. The Gothic kingdom of Italy under Theodoric, following a long period of weakness and internal strife, was not only accepted by the Italian people but celebrated by them as a return to the Golden Age. Why was this? Because it was good and wise? Only in part. It was principally because Theodoric made himself King of Italy, made Italy *his* kingdom. He thought no more of his own country or what he had left behind him, but only of the interests and necessities of his new realm and his new people, to whom he henceforth devoted himself entirely.

No nation, be it the most Christian, the most enlightened, the most civilised which the world has ever seen, which governs another nation from a distance as a conquered province, and in its own interest rather than in theirs, can achieve a similar result.

Rome imposed her rule on many nations, some highly cultivated and civilised, some crude and barbarous, but in every case these countries were grafted into and became part of the Empire. Roman citizenship was open to the natives of the most distant provinces. The army with all its opportunities of advancement, was recruited from among them. Civil offices and preferments were theirs for the seeking. No avenue of ambition was closed for the most far removed or newly acquired subject of the Roman Empire, and provincials not only frequently filled the highest offices of the State, but in many instances attained to the Imperial Purple.

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

The Arabs and Turks in all their conquests gave equal opportunities to the citizens of the countries which they annexed, the one condition being that they should embrace Islam.

What equality, what opportunities does England give? What avenues of ambition does she open to the people of India?

Young Indian princes are sometimes sent to England to be educated. No greater injustice could be done them, as it prepares for them a life of disappointment and dissatisfaction, and too often unfits them for their duties at home by destroying their interest in their own country and their own affairs.

There have been governors, and there are English officials in the Civil Service here and there, who try to ameliorate these hard social conditions and to give the Indians a fairer chance; but their efforts are in vain. The intolerance and ingrained sense of their own superiority is too much a part of the English nature, too strong a sentiment with the majority.

A Dutch lady of high rank once said to me that she had many English friends, but that their friendship was not quite satisfying because in their intercourse with her and all other "foreigners" there was always a certain air of condescension. This is not always true. There are many English people who thoroughly appreciate the society of those of other nationalities. And, when it is true, it is more or less unconscious. But there is enough truth in it to explain their attitude, not towards the Indians only, but towards those of all nations and races who have fallen under their sway.

Having been born and having spent most of my life in Maryland and Virginia, no one knows the difference between the white man and the negro better than I do. I love the coloured people as only one can who has been brought up by a "mammy" and "cared for" rather than "waited on" by faithful servants of that race. But I realise, as everyone who has had the same experience must, that between the white man and the negro there is an impassable gulf, the one belonging to a superior, the other to an inferior race. But it is monstrous to apply the name of negro or even the epithet of black man to the Hindu, who represents the oldest and the earliest civilized branch of the Aryan race. Centuries of Indian sunlight have tanned his skin to buff or bronze, but his features, hair, and type remain unchanged. The same darkening of skin is taking place in the descendants of the Spaniards in Equatorial America, and would undoubtedly happen to the English themselves could they remain long enough in India.

The Hindu had a finished literature and the same elaborate religion and social system that he has to-day long before the first Celt had reached the shores of Britain, whereas the negro, with whom he is contemptuously classed, is a savage who never has and never will evolve an alphabet or anything beyond the most simple of the arts.

Every educated Englishman admits and must admit all this. But, like the man convinced against his will, he often remains "of the same opinion still," still speaks of the Hindu as a "nigger," still regards him and treats him with contempt. And in the same way would he speak of and treat the Japanese were he his subject instead of his ally.



During the days of Portuguese rule the moment a Hindu became converted to Christianity he attained perfect equality with his conquerors. Naturally, the majority became at least nominal Christians, took Portuguese names and became officially Portuguese. Under English sovereignty many have gone back to Brahminism, as they did to Buddhism in Ceylon. But there are still many Catholics in Madras and Bombay. In Goa they are all Catholics. It is a sad reflection that the nation which wrought all these conversions has officially apostasized.

But a Hindu who becomes a Christian now gains no temporal advantage therefrom, except a little patronage from the missionaries. There are many English missions in India, but the Government neither seeks nor recognises conversions. They have bound themselves to respect the different religions of India, and with the fulfilment of that bond they are absolved. The question of missions and missionaries in general we must consider later.

"England has given India justice and peace," to quote from G. W. Stevens in his admirable book, "In India," "but justice she does not want, and peace is not good for her." The latter assertion is literally true. Peace destroys the martial spirit of the country and permits the population to increase too rapidly. And doubtless there is much truth in the former assertion. There are different sorts of justice, and different views are held on the subject by different nations. Stevens instances the following:—

"The peasants, who never have any money in hand, are always obliged to borrow at seed-time in hopes of repaying at harvest. But as the harvest often

fails for lack of water the debt goes over till the next year, the cattle and farming implements being given as security. Another bad year may follow, leaving the poor peasant at the mercy of the Bunnia, the village usurer. Now in the days of native rule the Bunnia pressed him hard, but he was obliged to leave him food and seed for another season until a good year retrieved his fortunes. He dared not foreclose, for if he did and so brought the case into court, the Rajah heard of it, and judging that the man had money, since he had it to lend, his Highness was very liable to levy tribute. Now that this danger is removed, the Bunnia forecloses. The English court is obliged to give judgment, and the poor peasant is irretrievably ruined."

This is *justice*. And Stevens evidently believed that the English Courts rendered justice in every way. That doubtless is their own belief and intention, but it is not the opinion of the Indian.

England claims to have improved the condition of the country, and with truth; there is no gain-saying that. She has built railroads and harbours to open up the country and facilitate its commerce, she has improved the system of irrigation which existed from the earliest time, and she has built hospitals and introduced modern sanitation. All these things, of course, she has done for her own benefit and in her own interest as much, or more than for that of the people of India. But still they have shared in the advantages.

England claims to have improved the condition of the people of India. Has she done so or not? Let us call up the witness of History. We need not refer to the trial of Warren Hastings and his confession

of how he had oppressed and wrung their wealth out of the people of India. We will not even remark on the fact that Queen Victoria and Queen Alexandra wore the "Koh-i-noor!" But let us reflect for a few moments upon the great Indian Mutiny of 1857.

Books have been written on the subject lauding the heroism and fortitude of the English soldiers and civilians, the courage and patience of the English women and children to the skies. The praise undoubtedly is well deserved. Of the Indians nothing is told but their treachery and their atrocities. The story of the Indian Mutiny, as we hear it, is the tale of a wicked and inexcusable rebellion, gallantly and justly put down. Very little is said of its object, and nothing of its cause.

Switzerland and Greece rebelled against their foreign oppressors. Blood was shed, and doubtless some treachery was practised and some atrocities committed in both instances before they gained their liberty. But the world applauded and, in the case of Greece, helped, and the two rebellions have come down among the brightest and most heroic struggles in history.

Poland in her long and bloody conflict to regain her independence had the world's sympathy. And, in spite of all its horrors and atrocities, beside which the Mutiny was mere child's play, the French Revolution has found, and still finds, defenders.

Why then was it a crime for the Indians to seek to throw off a foreign yoke and regain their liberty? Let us inquire a little into the direct causes of the Mutiny. The cause generally given, and which in fact precipitated the outbreak, was as follows:

“A new type of rifle having been issued to the Sepoys, the unhappy blunder was perpetrated of smearing the cartridge with a composition of the fat of a cow, the sacred animal of the Hindus.” The soldiers complained, were assured by their officers that the fat was not that of a cow, and knew that these assurances were lies. General Anson, the Commander-in-Chief, expressed the opinion that their indignation and alarm were justified, but his verdict was either unheeded or came too late.

For fear of being considered to exaggerate, I will quote from an account which lies open to all travellers in India:—

“The eight years from 1848 to 1855, when Lord Dalhousie was Governor-General, will long be remembered in India. They form a period of large social and material reform, and are especially remarkable for British annexations of native territory. After a severe struggle with the warlike Sikhs, the Punjab was conquered and annexed in 1849. Lower Burmah followed in 1852, and Oudh, without conquest, in 1856.

“By a doctrine, not generally applied in the past, the territory of native princes who died without an heir of the body was now treated as lapsed to the British, an adopted heir not being recognised, and under this rule were resumed the principalities of Satara, Jhansi, Nagpur, and others. It was also decided that the stipends which had been paid to those native princes who had been deprived of their territories in former years, should not be continued to their successors.

“Among others, the Nana Sahib, the adopted heir of the ex-Peishwa of Poona, Raji Rao II, once the

head of the Mahrattas, was refused the pension of eighty thousand pounds per annum which his father had enjoyed during his life.

"The descendant of the Moghuls, Bahadur Shah, had been informed that his successor would not be allowed to live at Delhi or retain the regal title. And when the territory of the loyal King of Oude was annexed, owing to his persistent misgovernment, the surplus revenue of the state, after payment of a substantial pension to the king, was gathered into the coffers of the British Government.

"All this looked like a policy of unjust and high-handed aggression." (Murray omits to state what it actually was.)

"The leaders of the two most warlike races and of the two religions were under the belief that they had met with harsh treatment at the hands of the British." (How curious!)

"At this critical moment with Moghul and Mahratta, Mohammedan and Hindu princes, seriously disaffected towards the British, with an army of high caste soldiers alarmed concerning their pay, their privileges and their religion, there occurred the famous cartridge incident!"

Most people know the story of the Mutiny, or, at least, they think they do. But, as we have said before, few stop to consider its cause and still fewer know its end. After sixteen months of desperate fighting and varying fortunes, the rebellion was finally crushed in June, 1858, and then, as in all such cases, came the punishment of the rebels. Many of them, including the Ram of Jhansi, had already fallen in battle, and Nana Sahib had been driven into the jungles of Nepaul, where he is believed to have

died of fever. Tantia Topi, the Mahratta leader, was hunted through Central India for ten months, and finally betrayed, tried and condemned. Being a prince and a gallant soldier, he should at least have had a soldier's death. But he was hanged! Over the fate of others most writers on the Mutiny have thrown a veil. At the moment, the sympathies of the world were enlisted against them, but there are two sides to every story, and years afterwards that fate was made known to the world.

Crowns have often been the price of successful rebellions. Death is the usual punishment. But all must die, and to the Mohammedan, who looks for his reward in Paradise, and the Hindu, who believes that his patriotic struggle has earned him a happier reincarnation, death alone was not a sufficient penalty. The Moslem was unconquerable on this point. But the Hindu was only too vulnerable, for he believes that if his body is dismembered and the members dispersed, it means also the destruction of his soul. The principal mutineers were blown from the cannon's mouth. Such was the vengeance of the great Christian nation on a conquered people who had fought for their religion and their liberty, a punishment which meant to them not the loss of their lives, which they had given freely, but of their immortality.

There had been many small mutinies before the great one, but there have been none since. For since then British policy changed and all the precautions increased. The policy of annexation has been abandoned and the right of adoption conceded to the native princes. British troops now form one-half instead of one-sixth of the Indian army, and hold

all the important fortresses, arsenals, magazines and batteries of artillery.

Human sacrifices and Suttee have been abolished, and the British Government has sought to establish the re-marriage of Hindu widows, but in vain. Schools have been founded, and a college for the sons of princes at Ajmere—works more or less unnecessary and sometimes mischievous, since the Indians have schools of their own and the learning of the West generally does more harm than good in the East. Efforts, doubtless sincere ones, have been made to teach the Hindus things which they do not want to learn, and to help them in various ways.

The English are generous and kind-hearted by nature, as witness their innumerable charities. But these very charities are often indiscriminate and not altogether wise. And, in the same way, much that has been done for the Indian people, especially what is done in England, is done without understanding.

There are those who have lived in India—some of them Government officials—who absolve themselves by saying, as they did to me, that the Indians are impossible to understand. Doubtless they are difficult at first, especially to the English, who seldom really understand any of their continental neighbours, simply because they do not take the trouble to enter into their thoughts and feelings or to look at things from their point of view. But in one way Oriental nations are easier to understand than others, because to all of them and more than all to the Hindus, we have a key in their religion. True it is, that to study Brahminism is no light task, but the student has many aids in the books of Indian scholars, and

once they are assured of his goodwill, he may claim the assistance of the people.

In the early days of British occupation the officials, and indeed the English in India generally, took much more interest and pains to understand the country and its inhabitants than they do now or have done for many years back. Then it was more important to them, because when they came to India they came to stay. Nowadays the return to England is too easy. The minds of too many officials and soldiers are set on the holidays which they can spend in England. Stevens says they regard the time they have to stay in India as convicts do the term they must spend in prison. This, I think, is saying too much, for there are many pleasures and interests to be enjoyed in India. The temporary and uncomfortable way in which most people live who could, but will not take the trouble to make themselves real homes in India, show how great a lack of interest they feel in the country. In the old days there were beautiful and luxurious country houses surrounding the cities, and a well arranged and charming colonial life.

Something of this still lingers. I have seen and enjoyed it in Burmah and Ceylon. In India it seems now to be confined to those hill stations where Anglo-Indians have retired and settled down to live on their pensions, which go much farther there than in England.

There are English heroes in India, as I have said, and heroines too. I know one English lady, the wife of a Resident, who kept three thousand people alive through a famine, by helping them to weave and dye as of old, and to find markets for their



products. But these brilliant lights throw the too general indifference into darker shadow. And all that England does or may do for the people will never outweigh her one great crime against them. India lived by her arts, and India was rich, the treasure-house of the world. There can be no doubt that she carried on trade with the Assyrian, the Babylonian and the Persian Empires, and we possess an exact account of her commerce with Imperial Rome.

Every summer a fleet of a hundred and twenty vessels sailed from Myos Hormos, an Egyptian port on the Red Sea, and by the aid of the monsoon reached India in forty days. There these adventurous traders loaded their ships with a costly cargo of jewels and silks, pepper and spices for cooking, aromatics for incense and perfumes. And as the Indians were satisfied with the products of their own country and cared for nothing that Rome had to offer in return, all this was paid for with gold. It has been computed that what would be four million dollars of our money was annually carried to India and left there, and it was a matter of complaint in the Roman Senate that the wealth of the State was being given away to foreign nations.

India had trade also with other Asiatic nations across the mountains and the sea. While she sent out her manufactures and her jewels, which she alone knew how to cut and set, century after century, through ancient and mediæval times down to our own day, there poured into her from the rest of the world boundless streams of gold and silver.

So England found her, with her arts brought to perfection by the fostering care of the Moghul

Emperors and the happy influence of Saracenic and Persian art. And now?

The longest record in history is broken. India no longer exports her manufactures, she imports instead. Her world-famous looms are silent, her dye tubs empty. Her people no longer wear the hand-made muslins of their own manufacture, but the cottons of Lancashire. Her stone-cutters, her wood-carvers and mosaic makers are dead. Her architects and artists are forgotten. England has killed the arts of India!

Millions of people lived by weaving and dyeing, which they carried on in their own homes, and by working in wood and stone. All of these, deprived of their occupations, have been driven back to the land, and the land cannot support them.

Every year thirty per cent. of the population of this great peninsula are in danger of starvation. Every good year a million die of starvation, every bad year many more. On this foundation have been raised the great cotton industries of England. And now, even "idols" are made in Birmingham for India. Two arts alone have survived, those of the jeweller and the ivory carver, the former because it is patronised by the Indians themselves, who regard it as their safest investment, the latter, because there is still a market for ivory carvings. And nowhere can they be produced so cheaply as in India.

As a child, I can remember that Indian muslins could still be bought in Europe and even in America. Now, they can hardly be bought in India. Only in Agra could we find a few, and only there and in Benares hand made silks and gold brocades.

The Indians who have still money to buy them wear them, but in Europe they are no longer known.

*Sic transit gloria mundi !*

I shall be told that cotton factories have been established in India with English capital which give employment to the people. Yes. There are factories, as in Bombay, which remind one of those established by northern capital in our Southern States, where the proprietors reap enormous profits because the natives, here and there, work for starvation wages. Nor are the wages the only drawback. The Hindus who once worked their hand looms in their own homes are crowded together in these vast mills regardless of the tropical heat. And, in order to be near their work, they must live, as in Bombay, in horrible tenements piled story upon story, and often in inner rooms without light or air.

But when all is said and done, since the many and varied races which make up the population of Hindustan have lost their independence; they are fortunate in being under British rule, rather than under that of any other Power. Loving India as I do, I cannot help seeing and feeling that the English rarely give the Indians real sympathy or understanding, but I am glad to admit that they do their best to treat them justly, according to their lights, and that is more than can be said of most cases of European rule over native races.

It would seem that the old Portuguese domination in India was the most pleasing to the subjugated peoples, for even in those provinces which Portugal has lost, much of their influence remains. The Portuguese indeed sought glory and wealth in their

conquests, but the object which they had still more at heart was the conversion of those who fell under their sway to Christianity. In this they succeeded so well that the descendants of their converts are ardent Christians still, to whom the Portuguese Government would not dare to breathe its present apostasy.

The Indian peoples are all instinctively religious, and they responded to the religious Portuguese as they find it hard to respond to the unemotional English. They could love conquerors who tried to convert them, but they cannot love conquerors whose rule is associated with nothing spiritual at all. As I try to show in my next chapter, religion is at the heart of the problem of the English in India.

## XXIII

# RELIGION IN INDIA

**I**N India the source and reason of all things, the motive power of all action, the mainspring of life, is religion! This truth is apparent on the surface to all, and has therefore commanded the attention and forced the respect of the most indifferent and the most unwilling of her foreign conquerors. But only those who have studied her history from the earliest times and who above all have made a study of religion, have sounded its depths.

It is certain that the first Aryan emigration from the cradle of the race was across the Himalayas down into India. The second was that of those who settled Greece and Italy, since known as the Greeks and Latins, who are believed to have gone together: the more moderate spirits among them settled in the Hellenic Peninsula, while the more adventurous went on to Italy, or, according to some authorities, already in their fatherland were two distinct branches of the same race.

The third emigration was that of the Celts, who took a straight westerly course and spread themselves over Northern Europe, driving out the Pile Dwellers as they had driven out the Cave Dwellers in their time.

Let us stop a moment to consider the fate of these two primitive races.

The Pile Dwellers had built their homes in lakes and morasses, which were much more frequent in Northern Europe than now, secure positions which they reached by means of causeways or boats. Being apparently inconsiderable in numbers, they abandoned their dwellings to the Celts and retired to the mountains and forests, where they lived in the caves which the original inhabitants had already deserted.

As the Celts increased rapidly the Pile Dwellers were forced from these refuges, and driven at last into the fastnesses of the Pyrenees and the swamps of Finland, where their descendants still remain. They were a small dark race, so small that when they were still lurking among the forests of Germany, it is believed that their appearance gave rise to the belief in the dwarfs. But they were very clever and especially well versed in the arts of magic, which their descendants in Finland practised down into historic times.

Doubtless by their magic they conquered the Cave Dwellers, who were large and strong, even as the Dedananns overcame the Firbolgs in Ireland. But what became of the latter is a question which till now history and science alike have left unanswered.

I have my own theory on the subject, which I will venture to give here for what it is worth. The Cave Dwellers were savages, incapable like all savages of any advance or improvement, or of evolving any change in their condition. Their only implements were made of stone, their garments were the skins of wild beasts, and their food was supplied by the chase. Their accepted type was, as already said,

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

large and strong, with white skins, woolly red hair and negroid features.

The generally received theory that they quietly disappeared before the Pile Dwellers seems to me absolutely unconvincing. It is not only my theory, but my firm belief that they were pushed along into Spain, from whence they passed over into Africa by the Isthmus which geologists believe to have joined the two continents in pre-historic times. Arriving in Africa, the deserts of the north did not tempt them to linger, and doubtless making their way down the coast they reached the tropical forests which were so admirably adapted for the maintenance of savage life. There their descendants have remained, their white skins and red wool turning black in the course of centuries, while their physical strength and negroid features were perpetuated unchanged.

Left alone in the centre of the dark continent for thousands of years the negro lived as the Cave Dwellers had lived in the forests of Northern Europe, only that the influence of the Tropics inspired him with a rudimentary idea of agriculture and led him to build himself a bamboo hut and enclose it in a bamboo stockade, instead of taking shelter in the caves and depending on animal food as he had done in the north. Here also he became a cannibal, which seems to be the natural tendency of savages in tropical lands. And in all things he followed the instinct which makes all savages alike.

And yet there is one great point of difference between the negro and all other savages, a point established by the test of slavery. From time immemorial, the negro has been taken from his African forests and introduced into the civilisations

of the antique, mediæval and modern world, always as the slave of a superior race. In this condition he has prospered and developed as he could never have done by himself, and has absorbed and reflected a certain amount of the culture by which he was surrounded.

For any other savage this is impossible. Enslave the American Indian and he dies, as was proved in the West Indies, whose population faded before their white masters like the morning mist before the sun. Surround him with civilisation, as has happened in North America, and he disappears. So also the noble Maori and the miserable Bushman are disappearing before the Whites in the South Sea Islands. This peculiarity, this special gift of the negro which enables him to become the parasite of a superior race has led many, who did not know him, to mistake him for what he is not.

It was under this misapprehension among the people of New England, who imagined that the negro was a "black white man," that the Civil War in America was fought. Time and acquaintance soon proved their mistake. But what many of them, and most of the inhabitants of Europe still do not know is, that left to himself, freed entirely from white influence and control, the negro returns to savagery. The return may take a generation or only a few years, but Hayti, Liberia and the black belt of Georgia, and the Carolinas have furnished ample proof that it is only a question of time. This point of difference, even though more apparent than real, which distinguishes the negro from all other savages, is not and cannot be without a meaning and a cause.

Is it not the indestructible force of the primeval



which has lived on in the silence of Africa in this strange race, which endows it with its great physical strength, its resistance, and even its transient adaptability?

Another proof of the entire separateness and fundamental difference of the negro lies in the fact that when he interbreeds with any mentally superior race; the physical strength of his progeny is immediately lost, and at the second, or at most the third, generation his descendants disappear, fading away like red wine drowned in water.

After this digression, we must return to the fourth Aryan emigration, which was that of the Teutons and Slavs. Like the Greeks and Latins, they are believed to have entered Europe together. The Slavs, finding all they wanted in the plains of Russia and Hungary stopped and settled there. The Teutons more adventurous, perhaps, went on into the mountains and forests of what we now call Germany and Austria.

The Celts, as we have seen, were already there, but in their turn they were obliged to move onwards. Perhaps the first struggle between these kindred races, one of whom had been long enough away from their original nest to forget, took place in these dark forests which centuries later were still so mysterious and unknown.

Some of the Celts it is certain remained. A few tribes like the Cymbrii, who accompanied the Teutons on their attempted conquest of Italy in the second century B.C. But the majority were pushed on into Gaul, to which they gave its name. Some of those filtered through the Pyrenees into Spain, while many more, which proves the vast antiquity of

the event, crossed over and settled in the British Isles.

Concerning these, I would have much more to say about the effect of their separation on their traditions of the primeval Aryan religion. But I am writing or trying to write about India, and the danger is always with me, that when I am once on the subject of religion I shall write not a chapter but a book.

After these four emigrations, one branch of the Aryan race remained behind, and as this race was that which we now call the Persians, it seems most probable that the original home of the race was that part of Asia anciently known as Iran and later as Persia. This indeed is the old established belief on the subject and, notwithstanding the later theory that their cradle was in the Caucasus, to me it seems the best.

Of all the branches of the Aryan race these Persians or Iranians, who stayed always at home, resembled the most closely in their religion, language and mode of life those who had emigrated first and gone down across the Himalayas. Their religion remained—that which we know as Brahminism—until the time when Zarethustra Spitama taught them Monotheism and established the great Mazda Yaçna faith. Their ancient language, the “Zend” as it is generally called in Europe, or to give it its true name the “Barekhda,” was the twin sister of the Sanskrit, and their mode of life, making allowance for the difference of climate, was essentially the same, until it was changed by the Mohammedan conquest in the seventh century.

And so, by the long way round we come back to India, and all the evidence of these various emigrations

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

and their results gives us the proof that in India best of all through all the ages, and in India *alone* to-day, have been guarded and preserved the original religion and traditions of the Aryan race. A monument more stupendous than all the pyramids piled one upon the other, a ladder reaching from earth to heaven.

That a mine of ancient knowledge existed in India was known to the Greeks in very early times, and some of that knowledge was brought to them by Pythagoras, who in some still unexplained manner, succeeded in visiting the Indian Peninsula. That this knowledge trickled occasionally across the mountains into different parts of Asia is also certain. But it never spread. The wisdom of India was wisdom shut in a casket enclosed by the mountains and the sea, and such it remained through ancient and mediæval times.

Only after the sea-way had been found was this mine of jewels opened to the savants of the Western world, and even then it was only accessible through the classical Indian language, Sanskrit. But since the translation of the Vedas into English, which the world owes to Professor Max Müller, and which of course permitted their translation into other modern languages, this knowledge is open to all who seek it, and it is indeed strange and incomprehensible that it is still so little sought. Strangest of all is it that those who go out to govern India or to convert its inhabitants to Christianity, will so seldom take the trouble to learn or try to understand the thought and feeling, the religion and traditions which have existed in this wonderful country among this wonderful people for such unnumbered centuries.

And worst of all, not knowing, these people too often attempt to destroy this great monument, as we have called it before, which has outweathered all the storms of time. Truly they are like children attacking the great Pyramids with hammers and picks, whose lack of success is only the natural result.

Most people are aware that the Hindu religion is a pantheon composed of three principal and many lesser deities. They have also heard of the laws of Manu, the religious and social Hindu code. But they have often but little idea of what a stupendous and amazing structure has been reared on this foundation.

The Hindu tradition of the origin of the laws of Manu brings us back to and confirms our own. For "Manu" is Maha Nuvu, the great Nuvu "Noah" who, when the world was drowned by a flood, escaped in a boat with the seven great Penitents (Sanskrit, Rishis or Munis). These saints, as we should call them, were presumably accompanied by their wives. When the waters subsided the sacred boat was left stranded on the holy mountain, Mount Moru (Arrarat). Thence, Maha Nuvu and the Rishis descended into India where Maha Nuvu compiled his laws. And the Rishis and their descendants settled and cultivated the country, establishing there for all time as it would seem, their wonderful complex of religion and civilization.

The Greeks also had the tradition of the Flood, from which Deucalion and Pyrrha escaped and re-peopled the world. And it exists in a much more complete and circumstantial form in the old Teutonic and Scandinavian religions. And that it was not

merely an Aryan belief is proved by the fact that it was written on the walls of Babylon.

Why then do people doubt the account of the Flood given in the Bible? For, even if they deny the inspiration of our Holy Book, how can they ignore the testimony of so many irrefutable witnesses?

The religion and language which the Aryan settlers of India brought with them were the religion and language of the original and undivided Aryan race, but the "Laws of Manu," though founded on Aryan tradition, were made, and made with unparalleled wisdom, for *India*.

They came, these Aryan settlers, we must remember, from a country on the table-land of Central Asia. A country whose climate was temperate and where life and its principal occupations, agriculture and hunting, were regulated by the change of the seasons. And they went down across the mountains into a land essentially different, tropical or semi-tropical and not open on all sides like their own, but defended by the ramparts of the Himalayas on the north and cut off on the east, south and west from the rest of the world by an unknown and apparently limitless sea.

The conditions which thus faced them were new and strange. And, therefore, though their religion and language remained unaltered, the laws of Manu were framed to meet, and, it may be said, to conquer these conditions.

Civilization has always developed most rapidly in warm and genial climates where no actual interruption of the business of life was occasioned by winter. But tropical countries are always found inhabited by savages and, where they are conquered

and occupied by civilised races, the tendency is for the latter to lose their culture and sink into a gentle savagery. The makers of the laws of Manu must have been fully aware of this, for their code was framed to remind their descendants at every event of their lives, and indeed at every hour of the day, of their high origin and of what they owed to themselves and their ancestors.

India had been evidently well studied and thoroughly understood before the code was settled. It is no exaggeration to say that every difficulty which might arise was foreseen and every question answered. Is it any wonder then that these laws have lasted from time immemorial and still hold good?

The foundation on which the laws of Manu rest is "caste." And it is caste more than anything else which has preserved the Hindu religion and social life. Those who do not understand it, speak of it as a drawback and drag on the people, and advocate its abolition. But no wiser and more successful institution has ever existed, placing as it does knowledge and spiritual power in the hands of one class, temporal power in the hands of another, and dividing the rest of the people into two classes according to their occupations, but in neither of which was there any bar to their accumulating wealth or attaining an enviable eminence.

Each man in this way has, or may have, the ambition to excel in his own caste, while the feelings of envy and hatred towards those in a superior caste can have no existence, since there is and can be no question of his taking their place.

This is the spirit which prevailed in Europe in the

Middle Ages, and which made for general prosperity and perfection in all the arts. It is certainly preferable to the discontent, class hatred and anarchy which have taken its place. And the attempt to push caste aside and educate the Hindu on European lines is the principal cause of Indian anarchy.

Not to fatigue the reader with a too exhaustive description of the laws of Manu, a few instances of their adaptability to the conditions of life in India will suffice.

The Brahmins have been the guardians of religion and knowledge of the Vedas and of the laws of Manu since the morning of the world. Compare the fidelity and success of that guardianship with the history of the religion and knowledge of the Egyptians or the Greeks. The former is still living, still the motive power that it was three thousand years—and we know not how much more—ago. While the latter, though Egypt and Greece are still nations, are dead and forgotten.

Caste alone could achieve such a result. And that the Brahmin might never for a moment forget his superiority to, and responsibility for, the rest of his people, he wears and has always worn the badge of the triple cord. And his day, month and year are filled with religious ceremonies and observances, which he performs and has performed faithfully and untiringly year after year and century after century.

Is it a religion and a code like these that missionaries and officials of alien race think and hope to sweep away merely by their unproved assurances that it is "all in vain"? Really their assumption and

## RELIGION IN INDIA

conceit would make one laugh, were their ignorance and blindness not so utterly deplorable.

One of the wisest and most far-seeing of the precepts of the laws of Manu is the veneration for the "sacred" cow. India is for the most part a dry country, dependent on the rain which falls in the rainy season of three months for the rest of the year. If this rain is insufficient, as often happens, the result is a famine.

Maha Nuvu and the Rishis knew all this, and foresaw that in times of famine all edible animals were likely to be sacrificed for food. Animal food indeed was forbidden to the three higher castes, but permitted to the Sudras, and of course there were no rules for the Pariahs, except such as separated them from the castes. Now, the law-makers saw that though the three upper castes, the "twice born," might be above temptation in this respect, the ox and the cow would be in great danger from the Sudras and the Pariahs. And on the ox and especially on the sacred cow depended the perpetuation of the race—the life of India. For the ox drew the plough which tilled the fields and the cart which carried the grain to market, and the cow gave the people milk and butter.

The Sudras were indeed forbidden to eat beef or pork, the latter because it was unclean, but it was feared perhaps that this was not enough. The cow must be protected by special laws and for that purpose she was raised to the pedestal on which she, I think very rightfully, stands; pronounced the most sacred of all animals, the best gift of God to man.

To kill a cow is a greater crime and one more severely punished than to kill a man. And, such



is the faith of the Hindu, that it is a crime never committed. He dies of hunger rather than live by sacrilege. And so through the countless famines of India the cattle have been preserved, and through the cattle the life, religion and culture of India.

The bull is sacred to Shiva, and his image is found in every Shivite temple, an object of veneration only inferior to the god, his wife, the Goddess Parvati, and their sons Ganesh and Kartihkaya.

To the Mussulman the cow is also sacred in a modified way, for Mohammed, though striving to abolish all lesser adorations that God might be worshipped alone, taught that our debt of gratitude to the cow was so great that neither she nor the ox nor the bull should be sacrificed for food.

And into this country, where all religions unite in their veneration of the sacred cow, comes the Englishman who, whether or no, must eat beef every day. It is no excuse for him that he does not know what this means to the people of his "conquered provinces." He does know and does not care. Their opinion or esteem are beneath his notice. None but a Pariah will kill the ox for him, and, though he may find a Mohammedan to cook it for him, he does so, as Pontius Pilate delivered Our Lord to the Jews, washing his hands of the affair.

The English Government has pledged itself not to interfere with the various religions of India. But the individuals composing that Government cannot restrain their passion for beef. The facts that native beef is very poor and that beef of any kind is unsuitable food for the tropics do not deter them. And so the daily sacrilege goes on, and the good people

of the British Isles speak of the good example and elevating influence of their countrymen in India.

Nor is beef their only serious offence. The Aryans doubtless drank alcohol in some form in their original home, where it was suitable to the temperate climate, and each emigration carried the habit with them, making and drinking wine on the Mediterranean, and in Northern Europe, mead and beer. But, as India was the only tropical country which they invaded and settled, the habit was dropped as unsuitable to the new conditions. Alcohol is absolutely prohibited by the laws of Manu.

From my own personal knowledge of the Hindus as well as from the accounts of all reliable authorities, it is certain that the Hindus regard the consumption of alcohol with horror, as the basest and most degrading of sins, their idea being that drinking means getting drunk, and that the man who is drunk has lowered himself to the level of the beasts.

The first missionaries who found their way to India were French and Portuguese, not merely priests and monks, but holy men, who devoted their lives, as did the Apostles of our Lord, to the mission of carrying the cross. Among whom stands pre-eminent Saint Francis Xavier. These early missionaries sacrificed everything to their hope of success in their work, and for this purpose they renounced every habit or custom, no matter how innocent, which might offend the traditions or the prejudices of the Hindus.

The Hindus appreciated their heroism and devotion. Their celibacy, a condition almost unknown in the Tropics, commanded universal admiration, and the Brahmins themselves pronounced

them holy men and admitted the superiority of their religious teachings. In the middle of the eighteenth century there were in Southern India alone a million of native Christians, and the cross had been carried to Ceylon by an Indian who had taken a Dutch name, and has since been known as the Apostle of Ceylon and canonised, Saint Joseph Daas. But then came the English invasion. The Hindus who had sincerely believed that all Christians lived up to their religion—as they did to theirs—were horrified by the sight of a profligate, drunken, and worse than all, blasphemous soldiery turned loose among them like locusts in fields of grain. We have seen the teachers of this religion they said, but are these the scholars—these vicious, drunken, profane men? The soldiers maintained that they were Christians and the immediate result was that the majority of the Indian converts decided that if such were the results, the new religion was a failure. Eight hundred and fifty thousand of them went back to Brahminism.

As everyone knows the Mohammedans also abhor alcohol, which has been forbidden by the Prophet, and nowhere is their abhorrence stronger than in India. And the Englishman comes to this country and openly drinks whisky and wine and ale, regardless of the scandal he causes to the natives, or of the injury in this tropical climate to his own health. And were it only himself that he injured, the case would not be so bad, for to the Hindu he is but a Pariah, and to the Mussulman an object of indifference at best. But his bad influence extends to the people themselves.

The British Government derives £7,000,000 yearly revenue from its monopoly of salt, but not satisfied

with this, it has organized a sale of alcohol, alcohol so bad that the English soldiers are forbidden to drink it or to enter the shops and drinking booths where it is sold. But in the British estimation it is good enough for the Hindus. It is consumed chiefly by the Pariahs, but often, alas, the Sudras also succumb to this hitherto unknown temptation. And the British Government takes two-thirds of the profits!

Until recent years the Government also enjoyed an opium monopoly which was a much greater evil as, the drug not being specifically forbidden by the laws of Manu, it was indulged in openly by Sudras and even Sudra women. Here also the Government took two-thirds of the profits, but the trade became such a crying scandal and so disastrous in its results that, owing largely to the efforts of Mr. W. C. Caine, who gave it publicity in his writings, it was finally abolished in 1898.

Publicity killed the Government opium trade, but secrecy enables it still to enjoy another monopoly as bad or worse, though practised on a smaller scale. I noticed occasionally in the bazaars a stall in which there was nothing for sale but a lump of translucent green paste in an earthenware bowl. It looked like green "Turkish delight," and I supposed it was a sweetmeat, but if one watches till a customer comes, one sees that it must be a drug. The merchant scoops off with a wooden spoon a bit no larger than a thimble, for which the customer pays two annas and carries it quietly away.

There is no scandal, no roaring or stupefied drunkenness to reflect on this gentle Governmental means of raising revenue, but the unfortunate Hindu, who thus gives one of his two annas to the British

Government has purchased the most powerful intoxicant in the world, majoon (Indian hemp), or as we have heard of it in Europe, haschish! And he has done so as a rule because he wants to nerve himself to commit some crime.

In the time of the Khedive Ishmail the importation of majoon into Egypt was prohibited, and the English have never dared to raise the prohibition, but they sell it to their subjects in India, and their half of the price makes a neat little revenue.

In addition to these abuses there are other things, which, though perfectly harmless in themselves, cause the Indians to despise their English conquerors. The first is the eating of pork, which means defilement to both Hindus and Mohammedans, and which the English would do very well to deny themselves in this tropical climate for their own sake. Another, which is unavoidable, is the familiar intercourse between men and women. Then for the Hindus the wearing of leather is a defilement, and tooth-brushes, putting the bristles of a dead hog into one's mouth, a horror unspeakable. They brush their own teeth carefully with the soft twigs of trees.

There are other European habits which offend the Hindus' sense of propriety, but the list would be too long. The Mohammedan regards most of these as trivialities, but on the other hand the gambling and betting which he sees practised so openly and continuously by the English, are to him a very grave offence, gambling having been forbidden by the Prophet and branded as a mortal sin.

When all these things are considered, which as a rule they are not by English people who have never been in India, and also by many who have, it is

## RELIGION IN INDIA

evidently impossible for the Indian population, whether Hindu or Moslem, to regard their English conquerors with respect.

Many, perhaps most, of the Civil Service men, though they may have won the affection and even the esteem of the Indians for themselves, understand their feelings towards the English as a nation. And India has other friends: Lord Curzon and Rudyard Kipling among the best. But to the majority of English people, who believe that the Indians look up to their superior enlightenment and civilization, and that it is their duty to keep India for India's good, the real Indian opinion about them would be a great surprise.

## XXIV

### THE MISSIONARIES

**A**S soon as the Englishman had established his reputation for drinking and gambling, for eating the unclean hog and the sacred cow, and for other vile or sacrilegious practices. . . . And as soon as the Englishwoman had convinced the Indians that she was without discretion and independent of their opinion . . . then English missionaries came over to convert the "heathen" to the "religion of England" (1810). Is it strange that they have failed?

There were many reasons for their failure besides the unfortunate reputation established by their compatriots. Max Müller says that their principal stumbling block was that "they were not satisfied to make 'Christians,' they wanted to make 'English Christians.'" This is true. And the achievement of turning a devout Hindu or a fanatical Indian Mohammedan into an "English Christian," would be just about as easy as to build a pyramid with its apex on the ground and its base in the air.

The American missionaries, Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist, when they reached India in their turn, were not to be outdone. They set to work to make American Christians. This, of course, was much easier as Americans are a mixed and many-sided

## THE MISSIONARIES

race. The Hindus are good mimics, with a strong sense of humour. And the Pariahs and Eurasians, who are the only converts, have long been accustomed to flatter and cringe. I have seen in India native Christians, so called, who really were surprising imitations of various American sectarians.

The procedure of the Catholic missionaries in India and all over the East is and has always been entirely different. Following the example of the missionaries who converted the people of Northern Europe they seek analogies in the Asiatic religions with our own, and show how they lead up to ours and ours is the fulfilment of theirs. Love and sympathy are required in this work, as well as knowledge and skill. These qualities are brought to it much more surely by those, priests and nuns, who have renounced all the ties and the joys of this world and dedicated their lives to the service of God alone. The Protestant missionaries come with their wives and children, their family and social duties and cares, and often supplement their salaries by engaging in commercial business. The missionary priest having more time to study the Hindu, understands him better and knowing his tenacity allows him to retain everything in his former conception of religion and in his method and mode of worship, which is not incompatible with the Christian faith. The converts then made by the Catholics—and on the testimony of the English officials themselves they are the only real ones—become Christians, but they are Indian Christians.

[The second disability of the Protestant missionaries lies in their disunion.] Christianity was first preached in India by Catholic missionaries, and for two



centuries by them alone. And the Hindus are well aware that the Church of Rome is the original Christian church from which all the others have separated themselves. Now the Hindu is nothing if not orthodox. He abhors all heresies and schisms, for he has had his own struggles with them in times past, in Buddhism, Jainism and the heresy of the Sikhs with others of less importance, most of which he has conquered. A Church divided against itself is never an edifying spectacle, and the dissensions and recriminations of the various Protestant sects have long been a scandal in China and Japan. Of late years the missionaries in India have made a great improvement in this direction, for they have divided the country among them, one section being allotted to one sect and one to another. This has made but little difference in the result, but at least their position before the natives is much more dignified.

The third and principal reason why it is impossible for the Protestants to make real converts among the Hindus is that their religion is devoid of symbolism. To the Hindu, versed or at least accustomed from childhood to the splendid ceremonial of Brahminism, each of whose innumerable rites is the symbol of a sacred mystery, Protestantism is without meaning.

A man, apparently like all other men, belonging to no superior caste, nor set aside from the rest of manhood by the vow of celibacy, haranguing from a pulpit about a faith of which he has no proof to offer, and which seems to exert no ennobling influence on its followers, is a spectacle which the ignorant Hindu regards with indifference, or at best amusement; the cultivated Hindu with scorn. The

Catholic missionary, on the contrary, comes as the priest of a religion which the wise among the Hindus have known for centuries; and he offers them a symbolism and sacred mysteries higher, richer and deeper than their own.

As we have already seen, many of their mysteries have prepared them for the understanding and acceptance of ours. Their belief that their gods descend and rest on their altars makes clear to them the mystery of the Holy Eucharist. And the incarnations of Vishnu find their natural and triumphal end in the incarnation of our Lord.

There were, as most people need not to be told, nine Avatars of Vishnu, in all of which he, "the Preserver," came to fight against evil to help and enlighten mankind. These incarnations were in the rising scale as follows: the Fish, the Tortoise, the Eagle, the Boar, the Man Lion, the Dwarf, Parasu Rama (the Hero), Rama (the Great Hero), Krishna (the demi-god). Thus for nine, and, according to the teaching of the Vedas, in the tenth Avatar Vishnu should come as the Redeemer of the world. When Buddhism became the State religion of India, the Brahmins made the reluctant concession that the tenth Avatar of Vishnu was Buddha.

Aryan religions have always been adaptable. Greece, after a long period of conservatism, adopted a few of the Asiatic and African deities, while Rome opened her arms to them all, and even in the Teutonic Pantheon, though the Asen held the first rank, there were also the Wannen, who occupied the second. These Wannen, two of whom Freyer and Freya—the Sun god and the goddess of Beauty—were raised to an equality with the Asen, have given rise to much

discussion, but the general conclusion is that they were the gods of a conquered race.

To me it seems perfectly clear that they were the deities of the Celts, adopted and given the second place in heaven to content those who remained in Germany and assumed under the Teutonic supremacy the second place on earth, or at least in the forests beyond the Rhine. The home of the Wannen was Wannenheim, an island in the ocean to the west of the world. To me it seems beyond doubt that this island was Ireland, and that the Wannen were the Irish Dedannen, who lost Erin to the Milesians, when, retiring to their invisible or underground palaces, they lived on, mixing occasionally in love or war with mankind, till Christianity and time transformed them into the Irish fairies.

But the adoption of Buddha differed from all these other Aryan adoptions in that it failed. Effected without conviction by the Brahmins it had no value for the Buddhists, since the Indian Pantheon having been abolished by Gautama, the Avatars of Vishnu were a dead letter. As time went on, no redemption was evolved from the doctrines of Buddha, and the tenth Avatar remained an empty compliment to the founder of an extraneous religion. Strange to say, it still remains on the official record, though eleven centuries have passed since the suppression of Buddhism in India.

But what an opportunity it offers for the conversion of the Hindus to Christianity. A tenth Avatar there was to be, and it is evident that the conditions of that Avatar have been in no way fulfilled by Buddha, whose cult is not only banished from the land of its origin, but discarded and ignored by the



Naturally this is an extreme case. The young prince being the object of the entire zeal and devotion of the sovereign Pontiff could hardly do less than become a Christian. He was baptised under the name of his patron and spent the rest of his life in Italy as Prince Calixtus Ottoman. But I repeat, his is the only authentic case of the conversion of a Mussulman to Christianity.

The reason of this is evident to anyone acquainted with Islam. Our religion is already known to, and accepted in part by the Moslems, who maintain our faith is already included in theirs, our revelation being imperfect, while theirs is complete. The argument is historically unanswerable. And, should one venture to suggest that their Prophet and their revelation were false and ours alone are true—a course which I should not advise anyone to follow—they would answer that time was their witness, and that while false religions quickly wither and fade away, theirs has endured triumphantly for thirteen centuries and is still spreading in various parts of the world. Nor is it possible to persuade them that our religion is on a higher plane than theirs, since our most sacred mysteries offend their conception of the unity of God. The doctrines of the Incarnation and the Holy Eucharist to them are sacrilegious. Our symbolism to them is idolatry. And their final argument, to which we have indeed no answer, is that they live up to their religion better than we live up to ours.

With the Parsees, the possibility of converting them to Christianity is still more impossible. Those who have held for three and thirty centuries a faith which has been indeed a "light to their path and a lamp to their feet," will not change it now for one which

they have seen and constantly see profaned and betrayed by its nominal followers.

The Hindu indeed is no more anxious than the Moslem or the Parsee to change his religion. And were he even differently disposed it cannot be denied that serious obstacles are placed in his way. As we have observed before, the Church of England does not seek to make converts, though, of course, she accepts any who may come, because conversion is not the policy of the Government. The Government had pledged itself to respect the religions of India, which it does as far as such respect is convenient. But it has another objection to conversion, which is that the converts, who generally have practical reasons for their change of faith, often prove very troublesome.

It is therefore the Nonconformists, English and American, who share or dispute with the Catholics the winning of Indian souls. But Protestantism means nothing to the Hindu. He cannot understand a temple without an altar!

In the Catholic churches, no matter how small or poor the mission may be, he finds altars on which are holy images, more sacred to him than to us, since to him they are instinct with the presence of God. He finds altars before which burn lamps fed with consecrated oil, altars decked with flowers and perfumed with incense like his own. It is a religion which he finds there, not a mere exhortation to an audience which he cannot distinguish from a political meeting, but a religion which he can understand.

["Ah yes," some will say, "he understands it because it is idolatry like his own." No, the Hindu

is not an idolator and neither is the Catholic. But the Catholic religion appeals to him and he can accept it, because in it the great primeval religion still lives, as it lives in his own, while in Protestantism it is dead.

One of the greatest stumbling blocks in the way of Hindus becoming Christians is to be found in the Government schools, which though indeed founded with good intentions exercise a very unfortunate and mischievous influence on their pupils in many ways. In these schools the teaching of Christianity is prohibited, but all those modern theories which tend to destroy all religion are freely taught, pre-eminently Darwin's theory of the descent of man. The Indian student, who is almost invariably intelligent and usually extremely clever, learns for himself the tenets of Christianity, though with no thought of accepting them. He knows that it is the religion in which the English conquerors of his country profess to believe. And then he goes to an English school or college and is taught that not only Christianity but all other religions are vain; that man is only a beast descended from monkeys, and eventually from star-fish, and that there is, or at least logically can be, no God. What are the Hindus to think? What can they think, except that we are trying to trick them for reasons of our own into a religion which we do not believe ourselves.

Many Hindus and among them some Rajahs and Maharajahs complain, and justly, that their sons lose their religion at the Government schools and, acquiring no other, become atheists. And it must be remembered that atheism to the Hindu or indeed to any other Oriental is a thing of horror, which

European laxity and indifference can but little understand.

I know of one brave man, the headmaster of a Government school in Rajputana who, not being permitted to teach his pupils Christianity, keeps Brahmins on his staff to instruct them in their own religion. But he is the only one.

And still, in spite of all these difficulties, the Protestant missionaries do make converts. Who and what are they? The answer is very simple. Those who have something to gain and nothing to lose by the change, the Pariahs.

A Pariah is outside the pale of Brahminism, and his position as an outcast is not only humiliating and disadvantageous, but irremediable. By becoming a Christian he becomes a new creature and though he is no more acceptable in Hindu society than before, he is freed from all the disabilities of the Pariah. He obtains the patronage of the missionaries who defend him against the civil authorities, as often becomes necessary, and he manages as a rule to make "a good thing" out of his conversion. The Pariah is very wily, and doubtless often convinces the missionary of his sincerity. But the latter must know how much he stands to gain by becoming a Christian in name. And it must be admitted that many missionaries shut their eyes to the truth and ask nothing more than another name to add to the list of their converts, which they must send to the Missionary Boards at home.

The confidence of those good people, who take so much interest and spend so much on Foreign Missions in England and America, in the absolute perfection of their missionaries is very touching. In their



eyes a missionary can do no wrong, and no amount of testimony to the contrary would have any weight. But if the stories told and the complaints made against those impeccable beings by the English Civil Service all over India are true, these good people would do much better to spend their time and money on the conversion of the "heathen" at home.

I will give one or two of these discreditable episodes, which I know to be authentic later, but this chapter is already too long. I will close with the account of a missionary revival which was carried on in America two or three years ago, in which means were used to arouse sympathy and gain contributions which cannot be called anything but unscrupulous.

It seems that interest in the Indian Missions was flagging in America and donations to the cause were falling off. The plan was therefore adopted of having a travelling "show" company of missionaries who lectured, and persons who performed plays, which were intended to show the terrible need in which the natives of India stood of conversion, and the necessity for funds to carry on the work. Some of the actors in these plays were Hindus, and the scenery and costumes were fairly correct. But what is to be thought of the fact that the Suttee was represented as being not only a universal custom but a custom still in force! Human victims were depicted as being sacrificed to the Hindu gods, and mothers as throwing their infants into the Ganges.

No one knows better than the missionaries that the Suttee and the sacrifices to Kali, rare events at all times, have been abolished for nearly a century. While, as for the throwing of the babies into the Ganges—as in all my Indian studies I have found no

trace of it, and as such a thing is against all Hindu traditions, I must consider it an invention of the missionary imagination.

But the promoters of the revival could count on the fact that the majority of their audiences were hazy, if not completely ignorant, on all these points. What then can be thought of the motives which sought to exploit this ignorance? The financial results of the revival were, I believe, very satisfactory. And doubtless in this, as in some other instances, the missionaries justified themselves to themselves with the convenient excuse that the end justifies the means.

## BENARES

**O**N a glorious morning at sunrise we arrived at Benares, the Hindu Mecca—Jerusalem, Rome! The centre of Brahminism, and religious capital of India!

From the station we drove in the delicious freshness of the morning to the Hotel de Paris, which is situated, like most Indian hotels, outside the town, and found it in a large garden and quite attractive. The rooms were, like those of most Indian hotels, very bare, and arranged in the usual way, but a delightful veranda stretched along the front of the house. We had our baths and a fairly good breakfast, and then drove into the holy city.

Benares is in Bengal, and I must say that, though the country itself is very interesting, the Bengalis are far less sympathetic and attractive than the rest of the inhabitants of India. The first thing which strikes one unpleasantly is their dress. Here all the rich and brilliant colours of the rest of the peninsula have vanished. Men and women are all in white, not a clear shining white, but a dingy greyish white, not really dirty, but still not clean, for, though they wash their clothes constantly, they do so only in water without soap. The men wear turbans, coats and trousers, and the women drape themselves in

one piece of linen tied around their waists with a string, and wear another piece as a veil. And, as we have said before, their costume lacks the grace and charm of the other costumes of India.

The type of the Bengalis is different from, and much inferior to, all other Indian types which I have seen. They look small and weak after the noble Rajputs and the splendid Pathans, and their flat noses and thick lips give them a sensual and degenerate air. We could well compare them with their fellow countrymen, for all along the road we met pilgrims, male and female, from all over India, hurrying towards the sacred river.

We followed them. And, having thought about it and longed to see it for many years, it was with deep emotion that I approached the Ganges. Everyone knows the pictures of the holy city rising on the sandy bank, or rather, descending by flights of marble steps into the sacred river. Here it was at last, the vision condensed into the reality. And I must say with regret that it was my only disappointment in India. And why? The forms we expected were all there, it was the colour which was strangely lacking.

The city itself, built solidly of stone, varies from cream to grey. The broad river is a muddy yellow, finished on the farther side by banks of barren sand. And the figures, flitting up and down the stairs and along the quays, are all of that dull white, which the pilgrims also assume before they enter the holy city. A silence hangs along the river front, very different from the cheerful noise of other Indian cities, and it seems in some uneasy way like a city of the underworld, inhabited by silent, hurrying ghosts seeking rest and finding none.

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

We embarked on a dilapidated boat, where we sat on rickety chairs on an upper deck, and were rowed up and down the river front. Thus seen, the picturesqueness of the city appeared to much greater advantage. There are many Hindu temples with cupolas spiked with gold, the finest that of Kali, or Durga as she is called in Benares. Some white temples there are also, and one mosque built by Aurangzib. And there are various palaces belonging to Rajahs who wished to have a *pied-à-terre* in the holy city. One of these was displaced by an earthquake some years ago, and slid down into the river, where it remains, split, but otherwise perfect, half in and half out of the water—an extraordinary sight.

Pilgrims were bathing all along the quays, men, women and children. They keep their clothes on and duck under the muddy water seven times. Innumerable Brahmins sat under straw umbrellas, with their sacred cows beside them, waiting to mark the foreheads of the pilgrims when they came out of the river with the signs of Vishnu and Shiva. We passed the burning Ghat, always in active use, since the dead are brought here from as far as may be, that their ashes may be cast into the Ganges. But I would not look at it closely, and saw only three burning piles of wood.

On landing, we went to the Golden Temple, walking through narrow, close-built streets which reminded me of the streets of Delhi. But the carving and decoration of the buildings were quite different.

One is not allowed to enter the temple, which is the shrine of Shiva, the most sacred in India. But one is permitted to look into the interior through

a small square hole in the wall. I looked and saw a small image, seated cross-legged, of Shiva, before which incense was burning on a brass salver. There was a sound of kettledrums, accompanied by the soft shuffle of feet. The sacred dance was evidently going on, which is performed daily before the god. It was my first glimpse of Brahminism in action, my first actual sight of that great primeval religion which I had studied for so long, which animates and vibrates from one end to the other of this great peninsula; that religion which is the soul of India. An intense emotion filled me at this sudden revelation. The present seemed to vanish, and the past to be restored. It was as if time had suddenly rolled back two or three thousand years!

Opposite the temple is a flower shop, where people buy their floral offerings, principally, as it seemed, garlands of yellow and orange marigolds. We entered the shop with our guide, and were conducted up a little stairway to the second floor. There, from a balcony, we looked down on the high wall of the temple court and saw above it the golden cupolas of the temple, one conical, the other round. Crowds of people were going in and out bearing garlands of flowers. And here there was colour in the costumes—not merely white. It was a scene such as Herodotus saw at the gates of the temples of Babylon.

Just beside the flower shop is an exquisite little temple, quite open to view—just a pointed cupola on four columns, built of grey stone and carved as richly and with as much delicacy as the finest specimens of Gothic art. It is the temple of Shani, the Indian Saturn, a deity but little regarded by the devotees

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

who pass it by, all eager to pay their tribute to Shiva, Maha Deva.

We visited next the temple of Anna Purna, the goddess of Plenty, where we were permitted to enter the courtyard, which is surrounded by graceful arcades. The temple itself consists of a square raised platform, with pillars supporting the roof; the shrine being at the back, all of grey stone and very richly carved. This is a very popular temple, and the benevolent goddess who may be considered as an Indian Ceres, affords a charming contrast to the terrible Durga, who ranks in Benares only second to Shiva.

In the afternoon of the same day we had a beautiful drive out to Sarnath, where Buddha established himself after his enlightenment at Budhgaya. The country is very fertile and green with splendid spreading trees—the first rich land which we had seen in India.

Hsuan Tsang, the great Chinese pilgrim, describes the splendours of Sarnath in his delightful memoirs of his pilgrimage, made in the seventh century A.D. The splendours are long since departed, but it is still very interesting.

The Stupa, the only one we saw in India, is a great round tower, the upper part of which is ruined. Around the base, which is of red sandstone, still runs a broad band of most exquisite carvings in spiral designs, unlike anything which I have ever seen. Beyond are the ruins of a vihara (monastery). We walked about the garden enclosure, gazed at the ruins, and thought of all that had been here and was no more.

Sarnath was indeed the centre for a thousand years

of that so-called religion which now has not a follower left in India. Even now it is visited by pilgrims from the various countries where Buddhism still holds sway. Difficult and long as is the way, they come here and to Budhgaya to pay their tribute to what is now no more than the memory of the past. One of these it was our fortune to see. Just as we approached the vihara a tall figure with floating draperies of yellow silk came running towards us, over a green hill. As he came up to us we looked at him with interest. A tall young monk with fine features and shaven head carrying a pilgrim's staff, from his height and general type we took him for a native of Nepal.

That evening we had a real Indian entertainment.

After dinner we sat on our veranda in the rich dimness of the starlit night—for there was no moon. A Hindu musician came and played for us Indian airs on an Indian lute, very wild and sweet. And later there came a conjuror, whom we took inside where the lamps were lit, and who amused us for the rest of the evening. His tricks were very clever, and particularly so, being seen at such short range, since he sat beside us on the floor. But I have seen others like them in Egypt, and we were disappointed that he could not show us the Mango trick. Indeed, though various friends of ours assured us that it was constantly to be seen, sometimes being performed at the corners of the streets, we never saw it at all, nor any other of the far-famed Indian tricks.

The next day was Sunday. I learned when too late that there was an Italian Mission near the hotel, for, when I arrived there, Mass, which is always celebrated very early in India, was over. But I made



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

a visit to the priest, and had an interesting talk with him, and he took me into the little church, where I made my devotions.

In the afternoon we drove into Benares again, and went to the Temple of Durga (Kali) generally known as the Monkey Temple. There we were admitted into the courtyard, around which runs an arcade, charming, but rather simple in design, doubtless not to detract from the temple. Benares is the centre of that style of Hindu architecture known as Indo-Aryan, of which this Temple of Durga is one of the most perfect specimens, if not the masterpiece. Built of red sandstone, it is entirely covered with carving, the effect of which is very rich and beautiful. It consists of a square portico with a horizontal dome in which hangs a great bronze bell, and the shrine, which is without windows and topped with an exquisite conical cupola, pointed and tipped with gold.

Pretty little grey monkeys were playing and climbing all about the arcade and over the temple, the most attractive of their species that I have ever seen—sacred monkeys, whose ancestors have lived and been cherished here for centuries. Three Hindu women, Bengalis by their dress, were in the courtyard, the only other persons beside ourselves. One of them, pretty and young, was performing a little ceremony which interested me very much. Standing at the back of the shrine, she placed her thumb in the centre of a gilded lotus flower among the carving, and holding it there turned round and round under her arm repeating a prayer. I asked our guide what she was doing, and he replied: "She is worshipping the goddess." At that moment we heard the shriek

of a locomotive. The antique world rudely jarred by the voice of the new ! A strange contrast, such as now is constantly recurring, disturbing the dreamer in this land of the past.

The guardians of the temple then opened the chiselled brass doors of the shrine, and we dimly saw the goddess Kāli sitting cross-legged in the glimmer of a red lamp which hung over her head. This time she did not fill me with the same horror with which she had inspired me at Amber. But there I had seen her clearly revealed with the ashes of the sacrifice at her feet ; here she was only half seen in the red dusk of her shrine, and her terror was softened by the attractive accessories of her graceful women worshippers and the sweet little monkeys who played so fearlessly about her temple. Men and animals have been sacrificed over and over in this sunny courtyard in times past, but among her victims there was never a woman or a monkey.

We walked through the narrow streets of Benares, interesting and picturesque, and swarming with the concentrated life of Hindustan. We visited the principal silk merchant, whose house, built round a courtyard, was very attractive. But, although we bought some of the silks, they did not at all compare with those which we had found at Agra. For the first time I was able to buy some glass bracelets of real Hindu manufacture, not made in Bohemia as are most of those one sees. But I must frankly admit that the Hindu does not, at present at least, excel in the glass-blowing art. Those made in Bohemia, doubtless from old Indian designs, are quite as Oriental and much more beautiful.

Nothing shows the dignity and repose of the Hindu

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

woman better than this habit of wearing glass bracelets. Many of them wear bracelets which were put on their arms as children and which can no longer be taken off, and some of them will carry them unbroken to their funeral pyres. How long would glass bracelets last on the arms of women in America? "But East is East, and West is West."

Perhaps I have not done Benares justice, and, on reflection I think our mistake was in going there straight from Agra. One should not go anywhere immediately after Delhi and Agra, one should rest and dream awhile in some rural bungalow. And for Benares one should go there first.

## CALCUTTA

WE reached Calcutta half an hour after sunrise on a morning beautiful as are all Indian mornings. We were, as usual, awake with the sun, and gazing out of the windows of the train in surprise and delight at the landscape, which was such as we had seen nowhere in India, but only in Ceylon.

Semi-deserts and fantastic mountains, even the rich green country around Benares had disappeared, and here we found ourselves in luxuriant tropical jungles and swamps, palm groves, pale green ponds, and a profusion of flowers.

Here and there were tiny villages, or single huts, and it was interesting to see the awakening of Indian life. Everywhere the scene was the same. In front of the house door burned a small fire of cow dung, and around it in a circle as close as possible sat the men of the family muffled in white draperies up to their ears, warming their hands at the flame. The mists rising from the ponds make the air quite chilly at dawn, and the Hindu hates and fears the cold. They were all waiting for their breakfast, and sometimes we were fortunate enough to see a young woman come out of a house, her white robe fluttering in the morning breeze, bringing a bowl of rice.

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

Arrived at the station, which lies across the river, we drove in an open carriage over the celebrated Hugli Bridge. This bridge rivals that of Galata, across the Golden Horn. There the Turkish, here the Indian, Empire is passing, passing, passing, never stopping, never ending, irresistible as a river that flows to the sea. Once across the river we were in Calcutta, but it was still a long drive before we reached the Great Eastern Hotel.

Calcutta is not at all Indian, or at least not this Calcutta, though, as we later saw, there are great silent native quarters beyond the station with bazaars extending miles down the river. The grimy docks along which we drove, the shipping and the heavy traffic, are English. And the classical buildings, yellow and white, are like those around the Green and Regent's Parks. It reminds one all in all of the best and worst of London.

The Bengalis here, as in Benares, dress in dingy white, and some of them are wrapped in cashmere shawls. Hardly a woman is to be seen, and the few who appear are draped in the same dull white and pass unnoticed among the men. Babus there are in plenty, Hindus who have received an English education, dressed in black frock coats and small black caps; they seem smaller, thinner and weaker than the rest of their countrymen, and if the Bengali lacks charm at the best, he becomes, as a Babu, unattractive in the extreme.

The Great Eastern Hotel seemed very imposing after our experiences in the provinces. It had large airy rooms furnished with "real" furniture, and connected with bathrooms, fitted with "real plumbing," and supplied with hot and cold water.

The cooking was entirely English and very poor, as we soon convinced ourselves. The dining and reading rooms were so arranged that one was always in a draught, and all the floors were marble—a circumstance which caused me to be always looking for a footstool, or, in default of that, sitting with my feet on the rung of another chair.

We went down to breakfast, where we were joined by two young Englishmen, friends of ours. The animation in the dining-room suggested an American summer hotel to such an extent that I asked for a hot roll, but, alas, I was forced to content myself with a cold English "doorstep."

Following a glimmer of red and gold through the open archway, I entered the reading room and found a Rajah sitting writing at a desk, a Rajah in a long robe of crimson and gold brocade, with a large soft turban of Indian muslin on his head. Every now and then, amid all the banality of Calcutta, one is rewarded by a sight like this.

Calcutta is quite a modern city for India, but naturally so because it has been from its foundation an English city. The ground on which it stands was bought by the East India Company from Prince Azim, son of Aurangzib, the Governor of Bengal in the year 1700. Fort William, which still stands on the bank of the Hugli, was built five years previously. Fortunately, at the time when the city was built, the classic style of architecture prevailed in England. And, though it must always be a matter of surprise and regret that the early English settlers showed no appreciation of Indian art, the architects whom they brought out from England at least produced a city harmonious and dignified, a city

which, in its soft white and yellow, slips into the tropical green of the landscape like a pale hand into a velvet glove.

The centre of the capital's life is the Maidan, which simply means "Meadow" in Hindustani. This is a park bounded on the west by the Hugli River, on the east by Chowringhee Road, an important thoroughfare, and finished at the south by Government House and its gardens, the seat of the Viceroy. Extending towards the south from Government House is what would be called in England the "high," in America the "main" street, Old Courthouse Street.

After breakfast we went out and walked up and down this fine broad avenue and did some shopping. All the finest shops are here, and the first thing which struck me about them was that they were nearly all "men's shops," banks, tailors, gentlemen's furnishing stores, saddlers, and tobacconists. There was one department store, one European jeweller's, and one hairdresser. These three latter I visited, but I can say truly that I have no desire to re-visit any one of them. The hairdresser, an Italian, charged me ten shillings for washing my hair, and everything I had to buy was dear in proportion and second-rate.

The same afternoon we drove out with one of our two English friends, a young man just arrived in India to fill a good position, and who was taking a very intelligent interest in everything. We crossed the Hugli Bridge again and drove down the right bank of the river, first along hideous docks and through a hideous dingy bazaar, which showed too plainly the poverty of the people, as there was nothing there for sale but the necessities of life.

Behind this bazaar lies the native town, a compact mass of huts intersected by alleys only four feet wide—a mournful nursery of poverty, disease and death.

Finally we were past all this, and out in the rich tropical country, overflowing with vegetation and full of pools of water, and then into the Botanical Garden, which was the most beautiful tropical garden that I had ever seen. (The Peredignia, which I saw afterwards, is still more beautiful.)

There we drove through lovely alleys of palms and wonderful emerald-green trees and flowering plants. Leaving the carriage, we walked through the palm nurseries and the orchid houses, which, instead of being closed with glass, are protected with a light thatch from the too ardent kisses of the sun. The largest Banyan tree in India is there, a grove in itself of beauty and wonder. We walked among the branches and roots, one knows not which are which, as one might walk in the enchanted forest of a fairy tale. A green lake lies beside it, green as jade, and it is all so beautiful that I felt myself in the heart of the Tropics at last.

The sun set as we were leaving the gardens, and we drove the long way back in the darkness, brightened only by stars which came glimmering out, and the smoky lamps which flared along the road. We met many Babus coming home from their work, and, though there was neither sun nor moon, nor any possibility of rain, most of them held black umbrellas over their heads. Surprised at this, I asked the reason. Our friend replied that the reason they gave was that their umbrellas kept off the dust, but that the real reason lay much deeper and was



nothing less than a menace to British sovereignty in India.

The umbrella or parasol has always been the sign of honour and power in the East, parasols being carried over the heads of kings and princes and religious dignitaries, and reserved for their use alone. All Oriental countries seem to have shared the custom from time immemorial except Japan, where the general use of umbrellas was always permitted.

In India the use of umbrellas was permitted only to Brahmins and Kshattriyas as long as the peninsula retained its independence. But when the Sudras began to receive an English education, one of the first things they learned was the English doctrine of personal liberty, a doctrine which in many cases has come to mean liberty to do everything one should not, and the Babu's conception of putting the theory into practice was to carry an umbrella. But a long tradition is hard to shake off. For the first years of this assumption the Babu recognized the presence of a superior of his own nation or that of an English officer or official, or even any sort of a sahib, by putting down his umbrella. Doubtless he does so still in the presence of a Brahmin or a native prince, but he does so no longer for an Englishman; and when he carries his umbrella over his head in the dark, it is not, as he says, to keep off the dust, but to show his independence and his equality.

There is not much to see in Calcutta. After we had visited the Imperial Museum, the archæological section of which is most interesting, there was nothing more to do but to walk in Court House Street or drive in the Maidan. But it was bright and gay, and I am sure that the society there and the social life

## CALCUTTA

are charming, though our stay of only a few days was too short for us to take any part therein.

With our two young English friends we sat at a table in the hotel dining-room and watched the other people, or went and dined at an Italian restaurant where the food was much better. We drove in the Maidan, which is like an English park, where everyone else is driving and all sorts of sports are going on—a bright attractive place. We also visited the market, which is not a market alone but an immense bazaar full of European goods, and where all the wise people do their shopping instead of in Court House Street.

But, all in all, Calcutta, though agreeable, was not what we had come to India to see, and we were satisfied when the day came to leave it and go down to pay a visit to friends at Midnapur in Lower Bengal.

## XXVII

### STATION LIFE

OUR host who was in command of the Station, met us at the train, and drove us through a cloud of dust to his residence, which though called a bungalow, was a really quite imposing edifice. Built of grey stone, a long veranda raised several steps above the ground extended along the front, the roof supported by massive pillars of stone, and in the centre a *porte cochère*, also on heavy pillars, was built out over the drive which swept around a green circle in front of the house.

Our hostess, Mrs. K., awaited us on the veranda, with several Indian servants behind her, a pretty dainty blonde whom I call always "Airy, fairy Lilian." We were taken into a long narrow drawing-room, sparsely furnished, where we were joined by a Mr. S. and a Miss P., who were staying in the house, and regaled with a delicious tea.

This room had five long windows which opened on the veranda, and opposite them five high arches, beyond which was a central hall in which was a fireplace, sometimes used on cold evenings. Beyond the hall, and only separated from it by five more arches, was the dining-room, which was exactly similar to the drawing-room, its five windows opening on a veranda which ran along the back of the house.

## STATION LIFE

The ceilings were very high, and it will be seen that the whole centre of the house was thus practically one room.

The bedrooms opened from passages on each side of the hall, in one of which a staircase ascended to the roof.

Punkahs were moving slowly in all the rooms, pulled by servants outside by means of strings which ran through holes in the walls. I found them much less objectionable than electric fans, but I would much rather have dispensed with them altogether. The punkah in my dressing room was particularly trying. I found it impossible to do my hair (I had left my maid in Calcutta) as it blew it like a halo round my head. It also swept over the table in the middle of the room in a very disconcerting manner. But Mrs. K.'s ayah came to my assistance just in time and had the nuisance stopped. Why people want these "disturbers," I never could imagine. I do not like wind out of doors, and to have it in the house seems to me as uncomfortable as would be a system of indoor rain.

Dinner was served by a splendid "bearer," costumed in red and yellow, with a red silken turban. It was doubly pleasant, after so many weeks in hotels, to be sitting round a home table with friends.

Station life in India is delightful. It is so easy and lazy, and at the same time so gay and bright: it reminded me of our old-fashioned life at the Virginia Springs. English coldness and English reserve seem to melt in the tropical sun, and the English military and official society is as sociable, friendly and gay as any that may be found in the world. Men dance there with apparent delight who refuse to do so at

all in England, and they court the society of women as much as they avoid it at home. This at once makes for a gaiety quite lacking in England, and it may truly be said that in India every woman of any attraction whatever is a belle.

Formality is also to a great extent cast aside. Instead of having callers in the afternoon only, we had visitors dropping in from nine in the morning on, and as we spent most of the day on the veranda they were all received.

The day after our arrival we made a picnic. Starting at half-past three we drove through the bazaar of Midnapur, which is about all one ever sees of the town, and through some lovely green country with large trees and plenty of water. When we arrived at the Rupnarayan River a boat was awaiting us with four Hindu rowers, and, seating ourselves luxuriously on the red cushions round the stern, we had a lovely row down the river to where it is spanned by a dam. Here we landed on the very edge of the dam, and in considerable danger of going over it, mounted a flight of stone steps and walked along the embankment betwixt the river and a most picturesque canal. We found a lovely spot, where we sat down, made our tea, unpacked our basket and had an *al fresco* feast.

As we were sitting there a cobra came swimming down the river and was carried over the dam. No one went to its assistance, but its appearance gave us all a thrill. It was the first cobra we had seen in India, and indeed the first of the season, for in winter all the snakes are asleep and it was a matter of serious speculation how this one happened to be awake.

After that we sat and watched the sunset, and as

it grew dark we embarked again for home. I enjoyed every moment of this picnic; and the country, with its rich green plain, its wide river and spreading trees, reminded me of another which I love—Hungary.

The next morning Mrs. K. had gone out for a ride and I was sitting in the veranda by myself, when a lady drove up who introduced herself to me as the wife of the District Judge. Mrs. C. informed me that she was giving a dinner the following Monday for the officers of a regiment which would be passing through, and she wanted Mrs. K. and all the ladies who were staying in the house to come. She was very much disappointed when I told her that I and Miss P. were Mrs. K.'s only feminine guests. But, as she observed, she must make the best of it, and she made the request that Miss P. should come over that afternoon and stay till the dinner was over. She did not want any of our men as she already had too many. But, as I found, it is quite the custom in India to borrow young girls to help the hostess when there are extra men to entertain. Mrs. K. readily consented to the arrangement, and Miss P. and I went over to the Judge's to tea, and I left her there.

The Judge's house was the finest in the Station, and as much like an English country house as was possible in India. I find I have described it in my journal thus: "There is a real park with banyans and other fine trees, and the house is a real house of two stories with a round front, encircled by a pillared veranda. Quite a Georgian effect."

Mrs. C. had twin babies, boy and girl, eight months old. I was very anxious to see them, so we went

first into the nursery, a very large room with a small fireplace in which though the air was balmy and all the windows open, a wood fire was burning. The twins were most attractive and interesting. Each one was held in the arms of an Indian ayah, dressed in white, who regarded it with adoration and gave it up for a few moments with evident reluctance. The head nurse, who was English and the wife of a sergeant, had been ill, and lay on a *chaise-longue*, keeping a watchful eye on all that passed.

Whenever the ayahs approached each other, the baby girl held out her little arms to the boy, and, if they came near enough, she patted his cheeks, and I am sorry to relate that the baby boy received all these marks of affection with perfect indifference.

"Man is a hunter, woman is his game," was written of some state of society nearer to nature than ours. Where among us instinct still rules, as in infancy and early childhood, it always seems to be the little girl who makes love to the little boy. Later this instinct is suppressed by culture and convention, but it would seem to indicate that woman has remained more true to nature than man. Nowadays, everything is being done to destroy the natural instincts and femininity of woman, to make her the equal and the rival of man, to substitute comradeship or hostility for mutual attraction and love.

It is a grave responsibility which this age is taking. It should not be forgotten that, in summing up all the evils and signs of degeneration which shall precede the end of the world, the Prophet reaches his climax of disaster with the words: "*And desire shall fail!*"

After playing with the babies for some time we went into the drawing-room, an immense room,

## STATION LIFE

very well furnished and provided with a sort of funnel in the ceiling which carried off the hot air. Here the Judge joined us, a charming man, one of the most agreeable I met in India. My heart had already gone out to his wife, she was so whole-souled and endowed, like her little daughter, with so much natural charm. They were related to friends of mine in England, and we soon became great friends. We had a delicious tea, served on little lacquered tables, one for each person. Soon afterwards I returned home.

I afterwards visited most of the people in the Station, and found all their bungalows very much alike, very temporary and happy-go-lucky, and empty and rather uncared-for, except one, which had a very pretty garden.

On Sunday our host gave a hunting party in my husband's honour; a grand hunting party indeed, for though there were but five invited guests, there were five hundred native beaters, and the party started off in the motor-car of the Rajah, lent for the occasion, and completed the journey to the jungle on elephants. Mrs. K. accompanied them, and I should have liked the experience myself, but my husband thought it best for me to stay at home.

Mr. S., our host's uncle, was left to keep me company, and Miss P. came over from the Judge's to get her mail, and remained to *hazrie* (second breakfast) with us.

There was a little Catholic Mission ten minutes' walk through the fields from the house, and though a priest came there only once a month to celebrate Mass, I went over and spent an hour in the little chapel at my devotions. Mr. S. accompanied me,



for, as I was delighted to find, he had become a convert to our faith in India, where he had spent many years, and where he proposed always to remain.

Later I met in Southern India another Englishman, a District Officer, who had also become a Catholic in India, and both from the same cause—because they saw the different way in which the Catholic and the Protestant missionaries lived and worked among the Hindus.

About four o'clock the kind Judge drove over for me in a nice little trap and took me back with him to tea. His wife received me in a lovely green gown, and I found a number of persons assembled in the drawing-room. We had a delicious tea, and it was very gay and bright—a real Indian Sunday afternoon.

After tea the Judge asked me to take a walk in the gardens, which I found very interesting. Like many English gardens, they are enclosed in high stone walls, with gates of iron grille. The flower garden is lovely, being very old, and in the spring it must be one mass of bloom. The vegetable garden has a round stone basin in the centre, from which two tiny canals emanate at right angles, making a very picturesque effect. At one corner was a bed of radishes, which I recognized, having often pulled and eaten them in other gardens myself. But every other plant in the enclosure was exactly alike and just the same size: it reminded me of a garden in a Walter Crane picture-book. Having found out for myself that India produced every vegetable which we enjoy in the Southern States of America, I had looked to see green corn, tomatoes, egg-plants, okra, and lima beans, but here only this strange

plant which I did not know by sight. I asked what it was, and the Judge answered with evident pride: "Cauliflower." Every plant in the garden was a cauliflower!

It is said that to the Englishman vegetables mean the different varieties of cabbage—cabbage on weekdays all the year round, and cauliflower or brussels sprouts on Sunday. Cabbage had indeed been served to us in all the Indian hotels, but after I had seen the markets I bought vegetables for ourselves, and told the managers how to have them cooked, very much to their surprise, for, as they all said, "English people make nothing of our vegetables." Indeed, they disdain them entirely. One of their first acts, when they began to settle down in India, was to bring over their potatoes and cabbage. And it is absolutely useless to point out to them that both potatoes and cabbage are too heavy to be digestible in the Tropics. They eat beef regardless of everything, and in like manner they must have with it potatoes and cabbage.

At the K.'s, though they had always several courses of meat, boiled potatoes, and cauliflower with a flour and water sauce, were served with each course; and I have good reason to think it is the same everywhere.

Only at one time of the year, when all varieties of cabbage are out of season, they eat okra, which they call "ladyfingers." But how? They peel the skin off, throwing away the seeds in which are all the flavour, and boil it in water without salt. Naturally they do not like it, but though I offered to show them the many delicious ways in which we prepare okra, nobody cared to learn.

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

If I lived in India, which I should be very glad to do, I would undertake to live almost as well as I could in Maryland or Virginia. Our vegetables, and more than our fruits, are there; our spices and seasoning and rice; and to fatten the chickens and turkeys is a mere matter of feeding them on corn. But the great question of all is one which we understand in America, and which in England they do not—the question of ice. Ice may be bought all over India, artificially made, and it is not even dear. But English people will not use it, except to cool their drinks, because they do not use it in England. In consequence they are obliged to eat all their meat as soon as it is killed—some people overcome toughness by pounding it into hash—but the whole result of thus scorning the resources of the country and defying the climate is that the English in India live, as a rule, very badly, when they might live very well.

After we had finished the inspection of the cauliflowers I paid another visit to the twins in the nursery; and then, as the darkness had fallen, the Judge drove me home.

We had expected the hunting party back in time for dinner at eight o'clock, but as there was no sign of them by that time we waited till nine. Then, as the good uncle seemed hungry, I consented to sit down, though I began to feel anxious. Afterwards we sat in the drawing-room till midnight, when I was persuaded that they were stopping somewhere for the night, and went to bed. At half-past six next morning my husband returned. He said that they had broken a tire, and were obliged to return by train. I asked if he had enjoyed himself, he said "yes," and that "they had gotten a bear."

As he was very sleepy he went at once to bed, and it was several hours later that I learned from the others that it was he who had shot the bear, and that it was six feet long, and the largest bear that had ever come out of that jungle. No one else had shot anything, and I naturally felt very proud of him.

The day passed gaily. I entertained visitors till the others got up, and in the afternoon we all went to the polo ground, where my hostess, who was a most accomplished horsewoman, played in a match. It was a charming sight indeed, the young officers and the one pretty woman, all in white, dashing about the green lawn against a background of tropical trees. Polo was always my favourite game. The whole Station was there, and I met for the first time an official and his wife, who were Eurasians: an unusual case and their position seemed to me anything but enviable. The man was silent, apparently aware of the difficulty of the situation, but the wife was very talkative and rather vulgar, and I could easily understand that it was not pleasant for the ladies of the Station to be obliged to associate with her.

Much as I admire the Hindus, my feeling towards the Eurasians is quite the reverse. And they are despised by the Hindus themselves.

This woman had a history, which I soon learned in whispers. She had a beautiful daughter, whose father had been an English officer whom the woman claimed as her first husband, but no one believed they had been married. The daughter, who had been brought up in a convent in England and only returned to India the year before, was not only beautiful but charming and refined. Everyone liked her, and whenever it was possible she was invited instead of

her mother. This young girl interested me very much, and her destiny seemed to me very sad. Cut off from the people of her native country by her education and her stepfather's official position, she was constantly in the company of attractive English officers, who talked and danced with her. But suppose she lost her heart to one of them! He would not marry her.

The last event of our visit was the dinner party, which the Judge and his wife were giving to the "passing" regiment, and which proved very interesting. My hostess and I drove off in state, leaving our men folk on the verandah looking regretfully after us. We were the last to arrive, and found quite a large party assembled, with several extra men. Nearly all the men were officers, but one could not distinguish them as none of them were in uniform. The Judge took me down to dinner, and a captain sat on my other hand. They were both very bright and gay, and I enjoyed myself very much.

After dinner the ladies all thanked me for coming, because I had given them a variety. Ordinarily the Judge must have taken in Mrs. K., and certain other routine would have been followed. But as—being a stranger—the Judge took me, everyone else had to change. The beautiful semi-Eurasian was there. I sought her out and had a talk with her, and I shall never forget her. When the men rejoined us we played bridge, and the party did not break up till midnight.

The next day we returned to Calcutta. The visit had been one of pure pleasure, and contained only one disappointment. Mr. K. was the Resident, and

necessarily on intimate terms with the Rajah. I wished very much, to visit the ladies of his family, and asked my hostess to take me there. The Rajah lived at a country seat a few miles away. She showed the utmost surprise at my request; said she had never been there, and showed plainly that she had no desire to go. Nor was there anything unusual in this. The majority of Englishwomen in the Indies never see anything of Indian women or Indian life. They are not interested.

## XXVIII

### “ON THE ROAD TO MANDALAY”

**T**HREE days later we left Calcutta on the *Bharata* (a curious name for a boat, as in Sanskrit it is “War”) of the British India Line. A clean and comfortable boat it was, with an old-fashioned Indian cook who gave us quite a good table. Our voyage began at dawn, and the scene at the docks in the morning mists and the sunrise was very interesting.

Going down the Hugli we sat on deck all day and saw many steamers coming up, and a number of lightships which mark the channel. At sunset our pilot left us, an interesting episode to watch, and then we were fairly out in the Bay of Bengal.

The voyage lasted three days, and was quite pleasant. There were but few passengers, and the ship indeed was small. I sat on the captain's left and found him, like most of the British India captains, a very pleasant and intelligent man. Opposite me sat the ship's doctor, and of him I must relate something which proves my contention that the English do not know how to live in India. He remarked to me that he was taking over as a present to a lady in Rangoon a basket of vegetables, which he had bought for her in the great market in Calcutta, “because there

were no vegetables in Burmah." This surprised me very much, especially as the captain repeated the statement. I asked what kind of vegetables he was taking, and he answered proudly: "Cauliflower, cabbage and carrots."

A week later, in the market in Mandalay, I found every vegetable which can be found in the Lexington Market in Baltimore, considered the finest market in the world, in the months of July and August—okra, green corn, tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, radishes, squashes, egg-plants, beetroots, sweet potatoes, green peppers and various kinds of beans. Cabbage and carrots indeed were not there, and therefore two serious and fairly well-educated men had assured me that there were no vegetables in Burmah!

Of the Indian lands which we saw, the most interesting of course was Hindustan, and the most beautiful was Ceylon; my husband and I were both agreed on that, and yet we both liked Burmah the best. The charm of Burmah indeed is so great that no one can escape or resist it—a charm which goes straight to the heart! A land overflowing with beauty it is, a land rich in architecture; but it is much more than that, it is a happy land, the happiest, I think, in the world.

It belongs to that peninsula which only the French have named rightly, "Indo-Chine," where two civilizations meet, and whose people are like neither Hindus nor Chinese, but who, in the centuries in which they have dwelt in these forests and rich valleys along these great rivers, have evolved a new and happy type of their own. The population is small—only ten millions—and the country is very rich,



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

not only in forests of precious wood and luxuriant agricultural land, but in its oil-wells and its mines. And no ordinary mines they are, but mines of what the world holds most precious—rubies and jade. Amid all this wealth very few are rich, and none are poor. All are contented and happy and gay. The ideal state of society seems to have been achieved in Burmah.

But those who wish to see it should go and see it soon; for the foot of the foreign conqueror is on its shores, and the nightmare of civilization will be creeping up its rivers, climbing its mountains and invading its forests before long. The Burmese will learn the value of money and the taste of alcohol, and greed and discord and discontent, and all the other lessons which we have to teach. Before many years, though Burmah may be still on the map, its true spirit will have fled, and the "happy country" will be no more than a memory of the past.

But my love and admiration of Burmah notwithstanding, I shall not attempt to portray it in these pages, but shall content myself with the merest outline. Burmah has been described as no one else can describe it, painted as no one will ever paint it again, by Fielding Hall in his exquisite and inimitable book, "*The Soul of a People.*" After that it would be presumption in anyone else to undertake the same task, even though, as with him, it were a labour of love. I shall give here the notes from my journal, hoping that my outline may, like a Japanese sketch, suggest the thought to the imagination.

We arrived at Rangoon at sunrise and found our kind friend, Mr. McD., waiting for us at the dock. We were delighted to see him again, and the fact

of having a friend come to meet us made the beginning of the homelike impression which I felt all the time I was in Burmah. Mr. McD. put us into a large motor-car which, as he told us, had been lent him by a Chinese friend, and proceeded to show us Rangoon.

A very bright and cheerful city it is, where everything looks clean and neat and whose broad streets, bordered with magnificent trees which spread around them delicious green shade, reminded one of our own dear southern towns.

I was delighted with the native costume, which though ungraceful, charms from its radiant colour. Pink, crimson and soft red predominate, but sometimes emerald green or dark blue.

We drove past bungalows with the best kept gardens we found anywhere and agreed, to Mr. McD's delight, that it was the most attractive city we had seen in the Indies. The reason for this is very simple: it is so much farther away from England that it is worth the while of the British residents to make themselves at home.

We then went out to the Royal Lakes, so called because this was the royal park when Burmah was an independent kingdom, and descending from the car we walked about in the tropical gardens which surround them. The sky was a radiant turquoise, the flowers glorious in their rich colouring, as a mass of Indian jewels, and in the vegetation were a hundred different shades of green. As we stood beside one of the lakes and looked back towards the city, we had the rare opportunity of seeing the Schwe Dagon, the great golden pagoda, come glimmering and then flashing out of the morning mist.

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

Mr. McD. had spent thirty years in Burmah, and he said that not half a dozen times had he seen such a sight before, as almost never is there mist on the river at dawn. It was like a vision called up by enchantment!

Mr. McD. took us to his bungalow which he shared with a friend, a man as charming as himself, who was the Chief of Police in Burmah. The bungalow, or rather villa since it had two stories, which stood in the midst of a beautiful garden, was an old Portuguese house built of teak. 'Teak! Yes, in Burmah houses are generally built of precious woods, cedar or teak, and some I think even of sandal wood. A charming house it was, inside and out, with curtains and furniture-covers of flowered chintz, which seemed to reflect the bright colours of the tropical flowers in the garden, and beautiful old English knick-knacks which make the charm of an old English house.

The Chief of Police having joined us, we sat down to an excellent breakfast which was served on the verandah. In the centre of the table was a bunch of yellow flowers in a curious silver vase, which had been a Burmese bracelet; and a tortoiseshell cat sat beside me on the floor. It was a most delightful experience, and I felt so at home that I am sure I have been in Burmah before.

After breakfast our friends took us to the station and put us on the train for Mandalay. We had a very nice carriage to ourselves, our maid and valet being in another which communicated with ours, and as Burmah unfolded before us I can truly say that I have never enjoyed a journey more.

The country through which we passed, and indeed

the whole of Burmah, is very rich and prosperous, and all vivid green, as there is water in abundance—little rivers murmuring between reedy banks, and sparkling ponds starred with pink and blue lotus flowers.

Burmah is indeed the land of the lotus! That beautiful flower which one looks for in Egypt, its ancient home, in vain, and which even in India I found only cultivated in gardens, here runs wild and gives the final touch of beauty to a land already all beauty and charm.

Our road ran first through rice fields, and then through tangled forests, where the trees were bound together with green lianas and garlands of flowers. Every now and then we stopped at a little station, and each time it seemed to me as if I were turning over the pages of Fielding Hall's wonderful book. There were always people there waiting to see the train, all of whom looked well and happy, and most of whom were dressed in pink silk. A great contrast to sad and silent India.

Beside each station, under a little pointed roof, was a sort of rack holding two jars of water. Water always fresh and cool, because the little structure has been erected and is carefully tended by some benevolent Burmese for the convenience and refreshment of travellers and strangers. Behind the station is generally a village of quaint little houses built of precious woods. And every village has its pagoda and its rest-house, erected by private charity, and generally its Buddhist monastery.

The country is literally full of pagodas, for besides the one necessary to each village there are hundreds of others built by pious and charitable persons, as votive offerings or commemorative monuments. The

majority are of stone covered with white stucco, ornamented with barbaric richness. And they look—just like wedding cakes.

The monasteries are all built of teak, wonderfully carved, and are as a rule very beautiful.

The rest-houses, which are intended as a shelter for travellers, are copied from the Indian "rest-houses of the gods," and like them consist of a raised platform with a column at each corner supporting a winged roof. Only here they are built of teak, while in India they are of stone.

But all these things are so much better described in the "Soul of a People," that I hope everyone will read them there. I know of no book which gives such a real and true description of a country still almost unknown, and I agree with the author on every point except his idealization of Buddhism. On that I disagree with him so entirely, that, whereas he believes that the Burmese are so good and so happy because they are Buddhists, I maintain that they are what they are because it is their nature and in spite of Buddhism.

He admits himself that the Burmese all pray and make offerings and believe in the "old gods"—the old gods who reigned in the valley of the Irrawaddy before the doctrines of Buddha were preached there by Indian missionaries; the old gods who, despite all the pagodas and all the monasteries, reign in Burmah still! He even admits naively that since there is none to whom prayers may be addressed in the cult of Gautama, the Burmese pray to their own gods at the pagodas and the Buddhist shrines, and that the flowers and the garlands which they bring there are intended for them.

Being a student of Oriental religions, it is always a subject of regret to me that most people take no interest in them and will not study them. There are those who talk of Buddhism, but most of them know as little of it as of the others. Buddhism was made the fashion in the Western world a generation ago by Sir Edwin Arnold. That is all!

But there are other people who have studied and understand it, who admire and even believe or profess to believe it. They do not seem to realize that all that is good in Buddhism was borrowed from Brahminism, while all its selfish indifference and black pessimism were Gautama's own invention. Perhaps, they have never studied Brahminism. The veil of distance lends the cult of the Buddha enchantment. But the real reason why Buddhism has become lately so popular is that this is not a religious age, and Buddhism is not a religion.

To live up, or rather down, to the tenets of this dreary philosophy, for it is nothing more, one must renounce all the pleasures and comforts, the beauties and joys, the passions and desires of life. One must devote oneself to meditation and the contemplation of the unexplained, which is the only term I can use as, according to Gautama—who was, I am convinced, a nervous dyspeptic—"nothing really exists and there is nothing." It is evident that this "absorption" could not be practised outside of a monastery. How far it is practised inside the monastery I cannot judge. I can only say that the monks whom I met constantly out walking seemed very cheerful and quite interested in all that was going on, and that when I visited them they seemed very pleased to have company.

Mr. Fielding Hall was well acquainted with the monks, and he considers them to be consistent in their following of the Buddha. But one side of the question, the economic side, he does not seem to have considered at all. The Burmese are the most generous and charitable people in the world, and as there are no poor in Burmah they can only build pagodas and provide for the monks. And both they do royally. The monks have no expenses. The monasteries are built for them, their furniture, books, umbrellas, sandals, robes of yellow silk, and everything else they may wish for are given them as free gifts. According to the decree of Buddha they were to go out at sunrise to beg their food for the day. The ceremony is still observed—I shall describe it presently—but it is only a ceremony. The monks receive their food either from funds created for that purpose or from living benefactors, and their meals are brought them to the monasteries ready cooked twice a day. In addition to this they receive presents at all festivals. They have, or seem to have, perfect liberty to go about together or alone, and, but that they must renounce love or marriage, their lot seems very easy and luxurious, if not entirely enviable.

Dining-cars or wagon-restaurants are not yet known in Burmah, but we lunched and dined luxuriously on our own provisions with which we had been provided by our kind hosts. Then watching as long as we could pagodas, monasteries, villages, forests and ponds flying by in the soft silver moonlight we finally fell asleep, to dream of new wonders and delights to come.

## XXIX

### AMONG THE LOTUS FLOWERS

**T**HE next morning we arrived at Mandalay : an attractive town with broad streets lined with trees. The houses look rather Japanese, and there are many round wells, each on a stone platform, around which picturesque groups are always gathered.

On our way to the hotel we met a procession of Buddhist monks performing the ceremony, or rather going through the pretence, of seeking their food. They were walking in single file down the middle of the street, and each one carried a covered bowl of black lacquer. They had left their yellow parasols at home, perhaps because they did not correspond with their momentary character of mendicants. But they were dressed, as always, in the richest yellow silk. Only that here and, as I observed, all over Burmah, instead of canary yellow, as in Ceylon, their robes were saffron, or the colour of gold.

One of the monastic rules laid down by the Buddha was, that though the monks might eat whatever they liked except meat, they must only have two meals a day, both of which must be taken before noon. Why both before noon ? I confess I miss the point entirely, and can only conclude that the rule originated



in the unswerving purpose of Gautama to make everything as disagreeable as possible.

We arrived at the hotel, where we were given two rooms on the ground floor, which in spite of the warmth outside were damp and cold, for the reason that the sun was permanently excluded from them. The whole house indeed was arranged to reduce the temperature as far as possible to the English standard, the walls of the upper rooms being entirely composed of slats. The food there, as everywhere in Burmah, was better than in India, but otherwise it was a truly uncomfortable hotel.

Our first visit in Mandalay was to the fort, which contains the royal residence of the old kings of Burmah. This is surrounded by a broad moat, in which we could not see the water because it was so covered with lotus flowers, pink and blue. Beyond the moat, and rising out of it, are the red crenelated walls, rather low than high; and in each of the four sides is a gate, approached by a bridge of brick and white marble and crowned by a winged tower of teak, richly carved and gilded, which rises in seven tiers and terminates in a slender spire: "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever!"

Such also are the turrets or watch towers, thirteen of which flank each side of the square, and the entire effect is most picturesque.

The whole area enclosed by the walls of the fort is a beautiful park. Some of the officers of the garrison are quartered there in attractive bungalows, and the Military Club is there. But English ideas have advanced so much beyond those of Lord William Bentinck that the royal palaces and gardens still remain.

We went first to the king's garden, a delicious and—like everything in Burmah—a most homelike pleasure, bright with ponds thrown like mirrors among the luxurious green, and brilliant with tropical flowers.

There is a teak pavilion, almost such as one might find in West Virginia, where King Thebaw and his beloved Queen Supaya Lat used to come and sit in the mellow gold of the Burmese sunlight among their flowers. And here it was on the now crumbling veranda that the king surrendered himself when the English had taken Mandalay.

It was not long ago: the king and queen were living still, State prisoners in India, in the province of Bombay. But the pavilion is going to pieces, and indeed, like everything here which tells us of the past we had not come too soon to see and feel what has been. A few years hence we should have been too late.

In the centre of the fort stands the royal Palace, the Naudaw. Formerly it was a strongly fortified place, being surrounded by a brick wall and outside of that a teak stockade. The English have removed the defences and the smaller buildings—why, no one knows, but the palace itself is still standing, and some effort is being made to preserve it. But being built entirely of wood, soon or late it must follow the fate of its kings.

The palace is raised on a terrace, which is surrounded by a low wall and reached by graceful semi-circular steps, which overflow from above like cascades.

As we have said, it is all of wood, richly carved. Immense pillars of teak support the double roofs, and instead of open colonnades, as in the Indian palaces,

there are Venetian doors with fanlights of red or green glass, very much as in old Baltimore. Most of the interiors are gilded and painted in cinnabar red, some are all gold. In the apartments of the queen the walls are all mirrors set in gold fretwork and enriched with jewels of red and green glass.

In the throne-room the throne is still standing—a large structure in which the royal chair is raised on a platform approached by steps on each side and surmounted by a canopy. It is entirely carved, and gilded and jewelled, and is known as the Lion Throne.

Above it on the roof, as a spire is placed over the high altar of a cathedral, rises the “Shewpyathat,” a seven-storied gilded turret, the symbol of royalty, which, as it marks the centre of Mandalay, the Burmese believe also to mark the centre of the world.

The whole palace has a wonderful charm, so soft and rich and glowing in its red and gold. Barbaric, of course, but much more homelike than the Indian palaces, and still vibrant with the life of yesterday, for it was only in 1885 that Mandalay and with it the kingdom of Burmah fell. Less than forty years ago that this brilliant and happy Court was wiped out, and its king and queen carried away into exile.

And why? What evil had they done? “Oh! Thebaw did not govern well, he loved his wife too much and was too much under her influence.”

Opposite one of the gates of the palace is an exquisite little monastery built of teak, most richly carved and inlaid with mirror mosaic. With its winged roof and delicate columns and spires it is a gem of Burmese architecture which could only find

Just as we were standing in front of the monastery there came the procession of a boy who was thus entering on his monastic life, which was very interesting. First came two monks carrying ceremonial umbrellas of crimson satin fringed with gold. Then the little novice, a boy of nine or ten, robed like a monk in yellow silk, and then a row of girls

carrying plates of food, the offering which the parents were making to the monastery.

We then drove through the 'queen's gardens, gleaming with ponds and canals and bright with flowers, and out of the fort again through the city to the great bazaar. This is a great stone building all under one roof, which reminds one of the bazaar of Constantinople, except that instead of the usual Oriental shops, the merchants sit on raised platforms with their wares piled around them or sometimes on racks of shelves against the wall. But the great difference between this and all other bazaars is that most of the merchants are women.

The shopping hours here are early, and many of the women shopkeepers attend only from eight to ten, after which they go home and devote themselves to their private affairs, for the Burmese woman, though perhaps the most independent woman in all the East, is also and indeed pre-eminently a model of domesticity.

Most of the buyers too are women. One sees ladies making their purchases for the day followed by a maid with a basket, which reminded me of old-fashioned habits at home.

The vegetable market is the brightest, cleanest and most appetising I have ever seen. One may buy everything from jewels to groceries in different parts of the bazaar, but the most important and interesting stalls are those where silks are sold.

In Burmah every woman has her loom, so here she weaves silk for profit or for pleasure as women in Europe do fancywork. When she has made a piece of five or of eighteen yards, the two regulation lengths, if she does not want it herself she takes it

and sells it to a silk merchant in the bazaar. The eighteen yard lengths are intended for the men who wrap themselves in many folds. The five yards are for the women who wrap the silk around themselves below the waist, and complete their costume with a jacket of white linen or silk.

Of course the Burmese are Mongols, and the Mongol type does not entirely accord with our idea of beauty. But there are women in Burmah who are pretty from our point of view, and they are nearly all attractive, bright and fresh and healthy, with cream coloured skins and pink cheeks. Their coiffure is ugly, their hair being taken straight back and twisted in an ungraceful coil on top of their heads. It is true that their hair, always black, is very straight, and heavy and stiff. It could not be dressed in any European mode, but it would lend itself perfectly to the graceful and elaborate coiffure "Manchu-Chinoise."

They generally wear flowers in their hair, stuck on one side of their coil; and one sees trays of these flowers, with stems so short one wonders how they can be pinned on, for sale in the bazaars.

The Burmese women smoke continually, and such large cheroots that one wonders how they can hold them in their small red mouths. When not smoking they are always smiling, and often laughing—apparently always happy and content.

Gautama Siddhartha wished not only all men to be monks, but all women to become nuns. But in this latter he has signally failed: Buddha or Buddhism have never appealed to women, principally, I think, because he and his doctrine are unnatural, while woman the world over is and prefers to be natural.

In Burmah there is not one nun to balance against two hundred monks. And the few who exist in small convents here and there have played their part in life and failed. I have seen a few of them, and they seem far from happy. They have not, in a word, chosen the monastic life, but have been driven into it. And despite the splendour of their yellow robes and the fact that they are past their prime, I think they never lose the mortifying consciousness of their shaven heads. They have never loved the Buddha and never will, and therefore there is no consolation in following him.

Mohammed's wife, Kadijah, was his first convert, and bears the proud title in Islam of "Mother of the Believers," but the case of Gautama's wife, Yatha-Dayo, was entirely the reverse. She had lived with him for ten years in perfect happiness, or so she thought, and then her love was crowned by maternity and she bore him a son. Three days afterwards he abandoned her, just when she thought her happiness complete, and went forth to lead the life of a religious mendicant, as he had always wished. Yatha-Dayo could never forgive him, nor be reconciled to the cause which took him away from her and destroyed her happiness. And no other woman (Fielding Hall admits the fact) has ever forgiven him, or been reconciled.

Years afterwards, when their son was grown up, Gautama and Yatha-Dayo met again. Then, worn out with waiting and disappointment, she resigned herself to his doctrines and became a nun. But all that she took into her convent was a broken heart, and that is all that any Burmese woman brings there.

Just inside the principal entrance of the bazaar is one of the most interesting shops. A large low platform with glass cases along the wall at the back filled with silks. And here it was that we lingered the longest and made most of our purchases.

The owners of this shop are two sisters, pretty young women who are, we were told, quite rich, but who keep up their shop for their own pleasure. They were draped in bright checked silks—one lilac, one pink and green—and they wore white satin jackets fastened with diamond buttons, and large diamonds set in silver in their ears. They were generally smoking large cheroots, but laid them carefully down on brass trays while they attended to business. They were very attractive and interesting, and very friendly. I feel sure that could I have stayed longer in Burmah I should have made many friends there.

On the afternoon of the same day we went out to the Arkwan Pagoda (Arkwan means incomparable), the second most holy shrine in Burmah, the Shwe Dagon in Rangoon being the first.

Though there is an immense variety in pagodas, there is also a certain similarity in them all. Wherever it is possible the pagoda is built on top of a hill and approached by a long colonnade, the entrance to which is on the level ground below. These arcades are always rich in carving and gold.

As Mandalay lies on perfectly flat ground, the incomparable pagoda is perforce built on a level. But it is raised on a high platform, and rendered very imposing by its majestic elevation. And it is approached by an arcade, which, perhaps to make amends for its being on a level, is unusually long.

These arcades are always religious bazaars, being



bordered by stalls in which candles, incense, flowers, joss sticks, and ceremonial paper fans and umbrellas are sold.

The arcade of the Arkwan is so long that, in addition to all these sacramentals, there are stalls for various merchandise, principally jewellery, trinkets, toys and sweets—everything in short which may tempt the pilgrims who visit the shrine.

The pagoda itself is of white stone, square, and rising above its platform in six stories, each one smaller than the one below and surmounted by a gilded "pagoda roof" finished with the usual golden "Ti" (the umbrella of Buddha) fringed with bells which ring out a delicate music when swayed by the wind. Inside it is all resplendent red and gold. The shrine is surrounded by an ambulatory and railed in with a balustrade, whose rails are made of emerald green glass. In front it is entirely open, and there the worshippers enter and kneel in prayer, each holding a lighted candle in his hand. On the raised platform sits the most sacred image of Buddha in the world: a colossal statue seated on a lotus flower and covered with gold leaf, while the face is a mask of solid gold.

The tradition is that this image was made in the lifetime of Buddha, and was such an exact likeness that when he came to see it, it was impossible to tell the two apart. I like to believe everything, and am convinced that tradition is often more reliable than history, but this story presents insuperable difficulties. However, insuperable as they are, they evidently arouse no doubts in the minds of the devotees who kneel before it, rapt in prayer, quite oblivious of the facts that Gautama forbade his

followers to pray, and assured them that there was none—not even himself when he passed beyond the bourne—who could hear their prayers.

Inside and all around the shrine hang votive offerings: umbrellas of black or white gauze, ruffled and decorated with gold or silver tinsel, fans and bunches of peacock feathers, and two women had offered their hair! It was a unique and wonderful sight!

In the white courtyard which surrounds the pagoda, is a sacred tank in whose jade-green water sacred turtles are swimming lazily about, a purely Indian feature and one more proof that everything which has any reality in Buddhism, is borrowed from Brahminism. From this courtyard one has the best view of the pagoda, which rises so white and triumphant, so richly and softly carved, and so splendidly crowned with gold, that it well deserves its name of Arkwan.

Last of all on that well-filled day we visited the Golden Monastery. This, the finest monastery in Burmah, was erected by Queen Sapeya Lat, not yet fifty years ago, for Burmese art was not only still living, but at its best, when it was blighted, perhaps for ever, by the frost of foreign domination. There is a large park dotted with various buildings of carved teak, in the centre of which stands among ancient and majestic trees the beautiful monastery rising gracefully tier on tier of turrets and winged roofs. A marvel of carved and gilded teak.

Like all these monasteries, the principal apartment is a large hall, one end of which is raised about two feet above the floor. The lower part is for strangers and the scholars, who sit there while they are being

taught. The dais is reserved for the monks, and at the back of it against the wall are ranged images of Buddha, small shrines, chests full of manuscripts, ceremonial fans, and miscellaneous presents which the monks have received from the faithful.

This hall in the original Indian viharas, was surrounded by the cells of the monks. But in Burmah there are dormitories in separate buildings, except in the case of small village monasteries, where there is nothing but the hall. There the monks sleep on the dais on mats, which are rolled up around pillows and ranged against the wall during the day. Great or small, the vihara hall is always raised several steps above the ground, and surrounded by a veranda. And, though the winged roof may rise in seven tiers, there is never an upper story, for the reason that the monk is too holy a person to have anybody, apparently even another monk, over his head. Indeed, the reverence with which the monks are treated by the people is very touching, and worthy of a better cause. They are always addressed as Paya (Lord).

The hall of the Golden Monastery seems rather that of a fairy palace than one belonging to a religious community of supposed austerity. But one must remember that it was built for them by the Queen Sapeya Lat. The entire interior is in mirror work, gold and jewels. Here we were presented to the abbot, a fine looking old man with white hair, who was resting on a couch. His greeting, though courteous, was very languid. Our guide informed us that he was ill, so we did not linger to disturb his repose.

Outside, under the trees, we met several young

monks, who were very friendly and talkative, and who accompanied us about the park. A gazelle was tethered under a tree, and as we stopped to look at it, suddenly all the little boys who were doing their religious service in the monastery came running around us. They were very bright and lively, and glad to see us. We threw a quantity of pennies in the air which we happened to have, and they scrambled and jumped around us and over each other to get them, and we all had a great deal of fun.

As darkness was now falling we returned to the hotel where we dined on a turkey which we had seen and bought in the bazaar. Afterwards by the most lovely moonlight we drove down to the river bank, where we installed ourselves on the steamboat which was to take us on our voyage of discovery on the Irrawaddy, through upper Burmah to the Chinese frontier.

### XXX

## THE RIVER OF DELIGHT

I HAVE navigated many rivers, as well as many seas. Times innumerable have I floated up and down the Rhine, with ever new delight. I have followed the Danube through the beautiful mountains of Austria and the rich plains of Hungary. I have ascended the Narenta, from the Adriatic into the heart of the Balkans, and I have made the wonderful voyage up and down the Nile between Cairo and Assuan. I know our own dear American rivers, our wild beautiful Potomac best of all; and I have boated on the Seine and on the Thames. But all these rivers pale and fade away before the tropical splendour, the intensity, the enchantment of the marvellous Irrawaddy!

Imagine a river which winds for hundreds of miles through mountains, covered with tropical forests, glowing emerald under the softest of turquoise skies; a river shimmering like silver in the sunlight, along whose banks are villages built of precious woods, monasteries rich and fantastic with all the art of Indo-China, and pagodas, innumerable pagodas, glittering among the green, white, red and gold.

We had started before dawn, and as soon as the

sun was up I was hanging out of my window and watching the wonderful pageant. The procession of pagodas, for it was nothing less, which sweeps proudly up the river beyond Mandalay. "Why," the stranger may ask, "are there so many, many pagodas in Burmah? Why so many Buddhas sitting cross-legged on gilded lotus flowers?"

Because the Burmese, like all primitive people, are ardent in their devotion. Everyone who has it in his power builds a pagoda, dedicates it to Buddha, and then makes it the shrine where he worships and invokes the "old gods."

The monks, and also the guide-books, will tell you that people thus turn what wealth they may have into stone, and strew it carved and gilded along the river, because he who builds a pagoda is dispensed from reincarnation and attains Nirvana. But it is not true. The Burman's world is too beautiful and bright, and he loves it too well to wish to leave it and not return. Nirvana is only his name for paradise.

The Irrawaddy steamboats are most attractive and quite different from any others which I have ever seen. Their lower decks are reserved for the engines, the captain's and officers' quarters, and for the transportation of animals, generally horses, or the bright little ponies which come down from the mountains with the Shans and Kashins. The sacred cow is conspicuous by her absence in Burmah.

The upper deck is for passengers. The fore part, which is much larger and open, only covered with a roof, is reserved for native passengers. And the stern has a saloon, surrounded by cabins, with a balcony deck at the end.

The cabins are very comfortable, having large windows, washstands and running water, and iron bedsteads instead of berths. Their only drawback is that, being intended for English people, who are never happy unless they are chilly, the outside walls are composed principally of slats; and at night it was so cold that we had to sleep under our heavy steamer rugs. Indeed, this was one of the times when I wished most fervently that British conquests had been confined to the Arctic zone.

We averaged a thousand deck passengers, who came and went at every village. But in the cabin there were only three passengers besides ourselves—an old and extremely clever Doctor of Philosophy (an American who lived in Sicily and had taken his degree in Vienna) and an English officer (retired) and his wife.

When I was saying good-bye to my friends in England, one of my farewell visits was at a beautiful old manor near Westerham, in Kent. The lady of the manor, a most kind and charming woman, was much interested in our journey, though she never went outside of England herself. She told me that a niece and nephew-in-law of her husband were just starting on a trip to India, Burmah and Ceylon, and concluded that we would doubtless meet. I expressed the hope that we might have the pleasure, but smiled inwardly at the unlikelihood of the meeting in countries of such vast extent.

At our first breakfast on board the Irrawaddy boat we discovered that the English officer and his wife were the nephew and niece of our friends. The world is a small place after all! So we were a pleasant little company, with the addition of the captain of

## THE RIVER OF DELIGHT

the boat, a Dane, and the first officer, who was a Spaniard.

The Captain especially was a most interesting man, who had much to tell that was worth hearing. He had been going up and down the Irrawaddy for twenty years, and knew it and Burmah by heart.

Sometimes the Captain took me up on the bridge, but most of the time we sat on the stern deck and watched the scenery and the life along the shores and on the river. The colour of the picture was wonderful—the green of the mountains and the radiant blue of the sky, reflected back, with silver lights and lilac shadows, in the river.

And the life which floated on the water was that which I have known and loved from childhood, the life depicted on Chinese lacquer screens and work-boxes and on Japanese fans. Boats built of teak and cedar, with high prows richly carved, sailed with red brown sails, or poled by men in brilliant drapery and bee-hive hats, the boatmen of the screens and fans.

Rafts also floated down the Irrawaddy: rafts of teak, cut in the primeval forests and guided slowly down through the defiles and the far reaches of the river to the sea; rafts so precious that the smallest among them are valued at five thousand pounds.

And yet, strange as it seems, in spite of all this varied life and art of Indo-China, the greatest charm of the Irrawaddy for me lay in that it reminded me, not once but always, of one of our own rivers of the South!

The next day the scenery was wilder. And the parade of pagodas, which the day before had been



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

like a throng of pilgrims crowding towards the shrine of Mandalay, became lighter and farther apart. But this was only because the villages themselves were fewer and farther between. For each and every village in Burmah has its pagoda and its monastery, small and simple oftentimes, but always the best that the village has to give.

Our boat stopped at every hamlet, and as the current of the Irrawaddy is very strong the mode of securing it to the bank or primitive landing-stage was curious and well worth attention. As we approached the village, five of our sailors appeared on the stern deck where we generally sat, each with the loop of a rope on his right arm, the other end of which was made fast to the ship. Splendid-looking young men they were, brown and graceful as statues of bronze. Not Burmese and still not Indians, they showed much of the wild beauty of the Malay race. I asked the captain what they were and he said they all came from Chittagong, at the head of the bay of Bengal.

At the signal from the bridge they all jumped overboard and swam ashore, apparently pulling the boat after them by the ropes. It was always a most exciting scene, while the brown arms and legs were tossing among the foam; and some of them wore silver bracelets and anklets holding charms, which flashed through the water in the sun. Once they had gained their footing on the bank the boat was pulled alongside and made fast. A gangway was run ashore, and immediately a stream of life ran over it, to and fro—a shimmering silken stream of pink and red and green and sacred yellow.

Always some of our deck passengers left us and

## THE RIVER OF DELIGHT

others came to take their place. And for those who remained on board, food was brought—bowls of rice, and fruit and vegetables in baskets of plaited reeds. Buddhist monks came and went, holding their yellow parasols proudly over their shaven heads. Families with pretty little women carrying babies or leading children by the hand. And once a criminal was brought on in chains and walking between two native guards.

I went out often and walked among them on their deck, for they made a bright and charming picture. How different from the European steerage passengers on the deck of an Atlantic liner!

Each family brought with it a square of beautiful fresh straw matting, which they spread on the deck and on which they settled themselves to their own entire satisfaction. They had their pillows and their coverlets, with which they made their beds at night. And the pretty little women had brought their toilet tables and mirrors, which seemed all to be of Chinese workmanship. In the morning they were always seated before them arranging their hair and heightening their complexions with powder and rouge. Everything was neat and clean and in order, to the pink of perfection. Each family seemed to remain on its own square, and as I walked among them on the narrow paths left open for circulation, they reminded me of the pieces on a checker board.

The Buddhist monks seemed to come on board only for short stages. It was indeed easy for them to break their journey whenever they would, as there was always a monastery at hand.

After the prisoner came on board I went out to see how he had been disposed. I found him chained

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

to the railing of a stairway which led down to the lower deck, while his two guards sat in front with their eyes fixed upon him as if fearing that he might mysteriously disappear. I was told that he was a noted outlaw, a murderer, but I should never have thought it. His air was calm and confident, and he seemed as much at ease as any other passenger on the boat, far more so than his guards. And after all why not? The one doctrine of Buddhism in which these people really believe is reincarnation. And one need not fear to die when laying down one life means only taking up another.

On the third day out from Mandalay the scenery was still more beautiful. In the early afternoon we passed through the Second Defile; the Third we had passed in the night. Here the river runs swift and deep, between walls of forest mountains, rising six hundred feet on each side. I stood on the bridge all the way through the defile, and never have I seen any scenery more inspiring. The wild grandeur of the mountains softened by their mantle of tropical forest, and the river running purple under the turquoise sky. It was perfectly beautiful, and more than beautiful. It was glorious!

At sunset on the same day we were sitting on our deck in the stern, the water was pale green with violet shadows, and the western sky all brilliant rose. And then the moon came up behind the mountain, round and golden, and we agreed that it was the largest moon that we had ever seen.

A few moments later we had reached Bhamo, our "farthest East." My husband had been with me when I touched my farthest North and South and West, but in each of these directions he had been

## *THE RIVER OF DELIGHT*

much farther afield. But this was his farthest East as well as mine. And I, whose passion has always been the Orient, was very happy that we should make our "farthest East" together.

## XXXI

### “ULTIMA THULE”

**W**E had hardly reached the landing at Bhamo when we went on shore and, getting into a ramshackle tikkagarri, drove into the town. On account of the danger of floods it is prudently set back at some distance from the river.

Bhamo, which is at the head of navigation for steamers on the Irrawaddy, is a town of twelve thousand inhabitants, of whom one-third—the most influential third—are Chinese, and the rest Burmese, Shans and Kashins.

Our way led first through the Shan town, consisting of some small houses built of wood and bamboo, and a large encampment, which is known as the Shan Karavan Serai. The Shans and the Kashins are natives of the mountains, which form the boundary between Burmah and China. And it is they who carry on the trade between the two countries.

Just as we reached the caravanserai a Shan caravan was coming in: a train of the sweetest little pack mules, who looked as if they had stepped out of the window of a toy shop. A number of Shans were leading them along, and several fierce dogs brought up the rear. Each little mule carried two neat

baskets, one on each side of its saddle, and they were hung all over with diamond-shaped pieces of bright metal. I shall never forget them as they came in, glittering in the moonlight!

Then we drove through the lighted bazaar, where all was gaiety and animation.

The people of this “Ultima Thule” were most interesting—Shans, Kashins and Chinese, Burmans rustling in silk, and pretty Burmese girls with flowers in their hair.

Through the open window of a house I saw into a room a few feet above the street, a room hung with lighted Chinese lanterns and spread with Chinese matting, where, in the rosy light, there sat a dainty little Burmese lady in silk and jewels. On the floor she sat, beside a little lacquer table smoking a cigarette, and waiting for her husband to come home. The picture was worth the trip to Bhamo had there been nothing more.

Beyond the bazaar we went to the Chinese Temple, or Joss House, to reach which we had to alight from the tikkagarri and walk through a paved pathway between high stone walls. At the end of this we knocked at a heavy gate, which was presently opened by a dim figure, who silently motioned us inside. He had no light but the moon was very bright and, though we were afterwards told that we had had a dangerous adventure, I should be very sorry to have missed the experience.

We followed our guide through three mysterious Chinese courtyards, rich in carving, with pillars and winged roofs, which lay sleeping in the moonlight, glimmering softly with colour and gold. Then we were met by a Chinaman with a lamp, who conducted

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

us through a door with a high sill into a fourth court at the far side of which was the shrine.

Chinese temples are open to all. The man with the lamp mounted the steps of the shrine, which was more like the stage of a theatre than anything else, and we followed him.

In China there are three State religions: Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. The Emperor—though the Imperial House follows Kong Fu Tse—is the head of all three. And behind them all still stand, as in Burmah, the old gods.

For this reason, the Joss House being the only one in Bhamo, was sacred to all three cults.

The entire interior of the shrine was carved, painted and gilded with all the strange and grotesque richness of Chinese art. In the centre, with incense burning before him, sat a gold and alabaster Buddha, and ranged around along the walls were terrifying and unearthly figures seated as if in council—the images of the old gods. In the mingled light of the moon, the lamp and the red glimmering incense, this Chinese fane was the most weird and strangest sight that I have ever seen.

The next morning we were bright, and early on shore exploring Bhamo.

We went first to the market in the centre of the town, which was the scene of the greatest animation. In the mode of its arrangement it was like the market in the Dom Platz of some old-fashioned German town. But the people were very different.

Of these, the Kashins interested me the most. I had seen some of them before who were making pilgrimages to the shrines of Mandalay, and they had impressed me as the handsomest Mongols whom

I had ever seen. Their dress also was very striking. They all wore black velvet, with high boots to the knee, and the men's costume of jacket and trousers reminded me very much of the Hungarian costume, which came indeed from the steppes of Tartary. The women's dress had a tremendous dash, one might say *chic*. They wear on their heads a three-cornered black velvet turban, for all the world like the head-dress of Anne Boleyn. The rest of their costume consists of a black velvet pelisse reaching to the knee where it is met by the Tartar boots. It is ornamented with black braid and quantities of silver buttons, and held tight to the waist by a scarlet sash.

At the market we bought a quantity of orchids which were, as they told us, asleep, for Bhamo is the orchid fountain head. We took them home by all our devious ways, and some of them are living still.

From there we visited the Chinese bazaar, looked at many things, and bought a large piece of white fur.

Then we returned to the Joss House, which was still mysterious in the daylight and much more beautiful, as the sun showed us all the richness of its carving, and the splendour of its colour and gold. The fourth courtyard in particular, with its four turrets, two square and two hexagonal, with their winged roofs, is a glorious example of Chinese art.

Our last visit was to the Tkeindawgi Pagoda, which stands in a green meadow just outside the town. It is in the Siamese style, and looks like a great white bell with a gold top. A chaitya (hall) adjoins it, in which sits a colossal white Buddha, but which is otherwise of no artistic interest.

Bhamo is the last station in Burmah, which is held by English troops. At certain seasons the



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

steamship company run a small boat up the river beyond. Unfortunately that season was not ours, and we were not even allowed to drive any distance from the town as there was some trouble among the tribes in the mountains.

From the pagoda we looked out over a rich rolling country, emerald green. Three ranges of mountains finished the landscape, rising one behind the other. The farthest of the three was in China!

In the late afternoon our boat started on its voyage down the river. The limit of our journey had been reached, and for the first time since we left we had turned our backs towards the rising sun.

The guide books say: "There is not much to see in Bhamo." I had found a great deal there. For me it lives always in my memory like a sweet melody or a rare perfume. For me it is a radiant and unfading flower. Not only for its own mysterious irresistible charm, but because it is my "Extreme Orient"!

## XXXII

### ON THE FAR REACHES OF THE RIVER

**W**HEN we returned to our boat we found that we had a new and charming passenger, whom the captain introduced to us, and who became our constant companion for the rest of the voyage—Captain G., a Scotsman, and the most courteous young man whom I had met for some time; in these days when young men's manners are not on the up grade.

After sunset we three went up and joined the captain on the bridge to see the moon rise. The afterglow had faded and the world was all dark blue. The moon rose orange and then turned to gold. It was one of those sights which one never forgets.

The sky phenomena was very varied on the Irrawaddy, but all most beautiful. The next evening after a long quiet day which Captain G. spent with us on deck talking about India, which he knew by both heart and head, we had one of the most wonderful sunsets which I have ever seen. The west was a mass of rosy flame, which shot up in tongues and streamers, and above each flame hovered dusky cloudlets like wreaths of smoke. The effect was wildly and weirdly beautiful. It seemed as though the whole western world were on fire.

The next morning before breakfast our boat stopped, that we might visit one of the wonders of the world. There was not even a village at the spot, and we effected our landing with the greatest difficulty, climbing down into a row boat, and up again by means of planks on to the slippery muddy bank. Thence we followed a wild path through a tangle of green till we arrived in an open glade, where hangs the great bell of Mingun—the largest bell in the world.

It hangs in an exquisite teak pavilion, whose airy lightness entirely conceals the massive brick supports within. A pavilion crowned with three winged roofs all tipped with gold. The bell, which is of bronze, looks like all other bells, except that it has two Burmese lions sitting on top. But it is eighteen feet in diameter at the lip, thirty-one feet high, and its weight is ninety tons.

Three Buddhist nuns were fluttering around the pavilion like sad little wizened-up yellow butterflies. We talked with them by signs and gave them alms.

Near the bell are the ruins of a great pagoda, which was never finished, and finally wrecked by an earthquake. At present it is chiefly famous for being the largest mass of brickwork in the world.

At eleven o'clock of the same day we reached Mandalay and went on shore. We went first to the bazaar, where I bought some lovely pieces of silk to take home as presents for my friends and sisters-in-law.

On this occasion the little sisters looked brighter and more attractive than ever. Both of them wore skirts of olive green striped silk, while one had a jacket of white satin and the other, one of pink silk.

And in addition to their diamond buttons and star-shaped rings they had diamonds instead of flowers in their hair.

We looked through the stalls of jewellery, but most of the ornaments were trash, for unlike India, the jeweller's art is not one of the arts of Burmah. I was anxious to see some rubies, and finally found a heap of unset ones under a glass case. They were very rosy and bright, but somehow I doubted them. "Are these real rubies?" I asked our guide. "Oh yes," he replied with pride, "real rubies. They come from Paris!"

We then went to the shops where they were cutting jade, a most interesting process and quite independent of modern machinery. The jade comes down from the mines in large irregular blocks to Mandalay. There it is taken to these primitive open-air workshops, where one surface of each lump is polished with a suspended saw which a Burmese workman pulls slowly to and fro. No way of doing the work could be better, and thus it was doubtless done before Burmah was known to the Western world.

Most of the jade we saw was pale greyish-green, or else dark as the deepest malachite. The perfect green is found only in the mines in China.

After watching the work for awhile we went to the house of a great Chinese merchant who ships all the jade in Mandalay to Canton, where it is cut. He received us in a long narrow room, with Chinese chairs and tables—teak, with marble seats and tops—ranged around the walls on which Chinese picture panels were hanging. He had nothing to sell us, but he told us much that was interesting, and showed

us a bracelet of the perfect green jade worth four hundred rupees.

Our next visit was to a Chinese temple. A temple richer and more beautiful than the Joss House of Bhamo, though it lacked the mystery. It has three courtyards, with a shrine at the far end of the third, as in Bhamo, all the buildings being surmounted by the most exquisite winged roofs. The whole temple is a marvel of carving, painting and gilding—delicate and rare as the decoration of antique Chinese porcelain or the pictures on old Chinese fans. In all our Eastern travels we have seen nothing more interesting.

The same afternoon we drove outside the town to the "Four hundred and thirty pagodas."

This remarkable city of shrines occupies a rich green meadow, enclosed by a high white wall with wrought iron gates. It was the work of a pious uncle of King Thebaw, who wished to place the "Tripitaka" where all who ran could read. An extraordinary sight it is. All the pagodas are exactly alike, all white and richly carved. And each one contains a tablet written on both sides with consecutive parts of their sacred writings; the whole Buddhist scripture written and canopied in stone.

Mandalay really seemed to overflow with marvels as a fountain with water. One could go on and on with them, and we by no means saw them all. But I hope to return.

Our last visit was to the hundred pagodas. A similar construction, but here each pagoda contains not a tablet but a statue of Buddha in alabaster, and draped with yellow marble as the monks are draped with yellow silk.

In the centre of the enclosure is a large pagoda

ringed with five gold crowns, and containing a gilded and mirrored shrine in which sits a colossal Buddha.

I often wondered how many Buddhas there are in Burmah, and if their endless multiplication were not in the mind of our Lord, from whom nothing in heaven or earth was hid in the words : " The vain repetition of the heathen."

The Burmese Buddhas are all seated in one of three attitudes : the hands crossed on the breast (teaching) ; hands crossed in the lap (meditating) ; one hand in the lap, and one extended on the knee (renouncing the world). In a fourth attitude, which is but seldom found, the right hand is raised in exhortation. The feet are always crossed, and one or both soles turned up. The fingers and toes are all of the same length, a change from the usual order of things which was effected when Gautama became enlightened. The features are always coarse and heavy, and in the great image in the Arkwan pagoda, which is supposed to be the exact likeness of the founder of Buddhism, the face is particularly repulsive.

Once more we returned to the river. But not to our old boat the *Ta Ping*, but to a much larger and finer one, the *Nepaul*, which was to carry us back to Rangoon. Now we were very comfortable indeed, even having a luxurious bathroom of our own. But this part of the river below Mandalay is very uninteresting, with flat shores too far away. Now there were only two passengers besides ourselves. Two Germans, one middle aged, one young, and both very agreeable.

We stopped at more villages now, and the life on shore was very interesting. For the first time we saw real Mongol wagons, just such as those in which

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

the Tartars entered Europe, with two heavy wheels and a round top of fine straw matting stretched over hoops. These wagons in which they *lived* were quite different from the old Aryan wagons one sees in India, made only for transporting goods. They are drawn by teams of oxen, almost always white.

When I saw them for the first time, standing in a row beside the village landing, I recognised them with a strange thrill of pleasure. Calling my husband to look, I said to him: "Those wagons are just like the ones in which Attila came into and conquered Europe." "How do you know?" he asked. And I answered: "I remember."

On the second day below Mandalay we saw for the first time boats which came up from the sea: boats with square sails and shelters of straw matting like the wagon tops: just like the boats on old Chinese boxes and fans.

On the evening of this day we saw a most beautiful and unique pagoda on the right bank, which here was high and emerald-green; three blood-red terraces below, and above a graceful and slender pagoda all of gold.

We had among our deck passengers a number of Buddhist monks whom I was thus able to study at my ease.

And at every village the life ebbed and flowed between the boat and the shore.

On the third day at one of the villages where we stopped the captain brought me a bunch of real roses, with stems, something very rare in Burmah.

Again we saw some beautiful teak boats with high carved prows and sterns. And at half-past five in the afternoon we reached Prome and went on shore.

## ON THE FAR REACHES OF THE RIVER

Prome seemed to me extremely familiar. A stream runs down one side of the principal street over which, leading to each house, is a rickety wooden bridge. I felt as if I were in west Virginia, at Berkeley Springs! Trees like our sycamores bordered the street, and the families who lived in the houses, separated by tangled gardens, sat on their wooden verandahs in the glow of the sunset. They were Burmese and dressed in pink silk, but that was the only difference.

Overcome with delight and emotion I said to our English servant who was accompanying me on my ramble: "This is just like home." He looked at me curiously. When I thought it over afterwards I felt convinced that he had formed the opinion that we lived in a pagoda at home.

At the far end of the town from the river there is a splendid gilded pagoda on the top of a high hill. It is approached by long flights of steps, covered with carved teak roofs, one above the other, and each section has six towers, formed of eight roofs apiece. One gate is richly carved and gilded on a green ground. The other is a mosaic of mirror work.

We mounted flight after flight of steep stone steps, but when only half way to the top the sudden darkness of the Tropics fell. The day in these sun lands, was always too short. There were no lights in the sacred building, so that all we could do was to climb down again, and we never saw the pagoda at all.

Below Prome we were in the delta of the Irrawaddy, and here again the scenery is very interesting and quite unique. The river seems to disappear among the jungles of reeds and water plants of the most vivid green. It is indeed a swamp intersected by a network of natural canals, which are called creeks.



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

Among these creeks we wound our way amid gilded pagodas, winged-roofed monasteries, and villages bright with all the colour and glow of Burmese life. It was hard to tell sometimes which was land and which was water in the billowy tangle of green; but always the brilliant pageantry of Burmah was with us, fading behind us like a memory and still beckoning us forward like a mirage.

On the third afternoon we slipped into the Rangoon river, and bore up its pale blue waves, which shimmered in the sunlight like Venetian glass.

Soon we saw rising from the water the dome of the cathedral, and various spires such as one finds in every city harbour; and, the one thing which one finds nowhere else but here, the great golden tower of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda, resplendent in the sun!

## RANGOON

WE reached Rangoon at three o'clock, and drove at once to the Minto Mansions. A new hotel, pretentious on the outside, but cheap and nasty on the in.

The Burmese are not good servants like the Hindus, but I managed to have the dirt and dust in our rooms somewhat modified. And after all, what did it matter, we were not travelling to visit hotels.

I had hoped to attend Mass at the cathedral, but, having come too late, I was happy to find a Te Deum and Benediction at five o'clock. The cathedral was quite new and built of red brick, but not without a certain grandeur. The interior is very rich and bright, the service was very beautiful, and I was happy to be there.

Most of the congregation were Eurasians, but there were some Burmese women wearing their own costume, but with veils of white lace over their heads. Most interesting of all was a group of Hindu women in gorgeous silks—crimson, purple and yellow, striped with gold—the graceful costume of Southern India, whence all the Hindus in Burmah seem to come.

The bishop and priests are all French, and the

Catholic Church plays a great rôle in Rangoon. France and Portugal, though they have apostatized in the West, are still true in the East.

When I reached the Minto Mansions again it was dark. We dressed and went down to dinner, and there we had a very agreeable surprise: they had a real French chef, apparently the only one in the Indies. We had a very good dinner, and on the succeeding days we lived most sumptuously. I explained to the manager that we did not like cabbage or potatoes, and he served up instead all the vegetables of the country, cooked just as we have them at home. We also discovered in the wine cellar a few bottles of "Moutin Rothschild," which were so excellent that we drank them all. Burmah is the real land of plenty.

The next day our first visit was to our friend Mr. B., the Chief of Police. He was most kind and gave us a policeman as our guard and guide, who for the rest of our stay in Rangoon accompanied us everywhere. I was at first a little embarrassed at the idea of seeming to be "in charge," but, at least no European could have guessed the truth, for our policeman, instead of the uniform of my beloved "Bobbies," who have so often helped me across Bond Street and Piccadilly, was attired in a white linen jacket, a skirt of pink and green plaid silk, and a turban of embroidered gauze.

The same day we went to the Shwe Dagon Pagoda. When I had seen this most sacred shrine of Burmah come glittering out of the mist till it shone in the full light in all its splendour, on our first morning in Rangoon, I thought it the most wonderful thing in the world. And so in its way it is. But, after

Fielding Hall's description of it, I found it disappointing, once attained. It is one of those works of art to which distance lends enchantment.

The entrance at the foot of the hill is very fine—winged roofs and towers of airy lightness, all red and gold, supported on pillars of white marble and approached by steps with fine marble balustrades. Large Burmese lions in marble with red mouths wide open and painted and gilded hoods, keep guard on either side, and seem to watch the crowd of worshippers in their gay coloured silks, who, day and night, are passing in and out.

The staircase which mounts the hill resembles the one at Prome, but is not nearly as fine. On the platforms which break the ascent are stalls in which candles, flowers, joss sticks, prayer flags and gold leaf are for sale.

The great platform on which the Shwe Dagon stands is very large and imposing. All around its edge are small pagodas and shrines, which have been erected by devout individuals.

The pagoda itself consists of an octagonal plinth, thirteen hundred and fifty-five feet in circumference, containing four chapels and the shrine; from this rises the golden tower, the entire height being three hundred and seventy feet. The plinth is richly carved, and entirely gilded; the tower itself is covered with plates of pure gold. Each one of these plates is the gift of a pious Burman, a pilgrim, or an Englishman or other foreign resident. From time to time they need some renewing. Each plate costs ten pounds, and is inscribed with the name of the donor, and confers on him a degree of Buddhist beatification.

The pagoda is surmounted by the usual Ti, the

sacred umbrella of Buddha. But it is the most splendid Ti in existence, being valued at fifty thousand pounds. It is of gold and silver and hung with innumerable bells studded with diamonds and other jewels.

The extreme sacredness of the Shwe Dagon is owing to the fact that it contains not only relics of Gautama, eight hairs of his head which were brought there by the brothers Ta Laing, Pu and Ta Paw, in 588 B.C., but also relics of the three Buddhas who preceded him. It must be remembered that Buddha means merely a sage, and the name had been applied to three others, noted for sanctity and wisdom, before the advent of Gautama Siddartha.

According to Buddhist tradition, the hill on which the Shwe Dagon stands was sacred for cycles before the time of Gautama. And it was for this reason that the Ta Laings brought hither the hairs of Buddha to inter them with the relics of his predecessors. In Burmese tradition it was sacred also since time immemorial, being under the special protection of one of the old gods, who watches over it still, the Sule Nat.

The original pagoda was only twenty-seven feet high. But generation after generation added to it layers of brick till it attained its present height. The shrine, as we see it at present, dates from 1564. After the shrine of the Arkwan pagoda, I found it disappointing. It is very small, and littered with burnt-out candles and faded flowers, while the presiding Buddha is quite insignificant after the majestic image at Mandalay.

In each of the four chapels sit colossal Buddhas surrounded by smaller ones, as many as can find

space, in alabaster, wood or sun-dried clay. Each pagoda on the platform is crowded with images in the same manner, so that the sacred hill could muster a perfect army of Buddhas against the invasion of any strange gods.

The small votive pagodas and shrines are very brilliant with gilding and mirror mosaic, but only a few of them are really fine. The one I thought by far the best is a large triple shrine of red and gold lacquer, with a splendid cornice of carved black teak. There is also a Chinese joss house, which is very rich and beautiful.

Worshippers are constantly on the platform, at all hours of the day and night, kneeling before the shrines burning candles and offering flowers.

There is another act of devotion which I have never seen elsewhere: the faithful buy sheets of gold leaf and press them on the carving of the plinth, where ever they see that the gilding is wearing off. This really seems to me much more to the purpose than the useless and wearisome multiplication of the Buddhas.

In one corner of the enclosure is the holy bell, the third largest in the world, which has a strange and beautiful history. After the second Burmese war the English attempted to carry it off as a trophy, but as it was being shipped it slipped from the travelling crane and fell into the river. The English engineers failed to recover it as it was imbedded in the mud. But some years later the Burmese begged that they might be allowed to try to raise it. Their petition was granted, and they succeeded where their foreign conquerors had failed.

The great bell hangs once more in triumph in a

richly decorated pavilion. And, to all who have eyes to see and ears to hear, it shows the truth that science and all the passing show of modern invention are vain and empty as compared with faith!

In an enclosure beyond the bell, is kept the sacred white elephant. Unfortunately just before our arrival in Burmah, the white elephant had died. And when they had sought among the sacred herd, which is kept in Upper Burmah, for his successor, none was directly forthcoming. They brought down to Rangoon the most promising specimen, a baby elephant three months old. A very sweet baby whom we were allowed to feed and caress. But it was not white and very grave fears were entertained that it would turn out gray.

Many persons dread white elephants, and seek to avoid their possession. But where a white elephant is needed the want is deeply felt and hard to fill.

In the afternoon we drove out to the royal lakes. It was most beautiful there, as we found it on our first visit in the early morning of our arrival in Rangoon. But then we had it all to ourselves, and now it was very gay and full of carriages, the occupants of which were very interesting. We stopped for a while to listen to the music of a military band, and had thus a good opportunity to observe the assembly of English, Burmese and mixed society. Near us was an elegant landau with fine horses and Burmese servants in curious half European livery. In it sat a charming little Burmese lady in native costume of rich flowered silk, with a gold coronet on her black hair. Beside her sat her husband, looking very coarse in European dress. All Orientals make

the greatest mistake when they abandon their own costume, but the Mongols most of all. Even the Chinese lose their dignity when they assume European attire.

There were several Englishmen present with their Burmese wives. This subject interested me very much, and I inquired carefully about it from Mr. B. and other English friends. The arrangement is as follows: An English official who comes to Burmah comes for a certain number of years. White women in Burmah are rare, so if he wishes a wife he chooses a young Burmese girl and marries her for a term of years, generally five. During this time she is according to Burmese law and custom his wife. When the term of years is out the marriage is dissolved, the English husband returns to England, and the Burmese wife remains at home, and as a rule contracts a second marriage with a Burman.

The only difficulty was created by the children, of whom there were generally two or three, and who were often not acceptable to the stepfather. Now, I am told this is always arranged by giving the children to the Religious Orders, French and Portuguese. The monastic fraternities take charge of the boys, and the nuns and sisters of mercy of the girls. The English father pays for each child a dower—about forty pounds. The children are reared, educated, and when they are grown up, occupations are found for the boys; and the girls are married or else embrace the religious life. Thus a large colony of native Catholics is springing up in Burmah whose mothers have been Buddhists, and whose fathers conformed to the Church of England.

It is a curious thing. I often wonder if the fathers,



gone back to England and married, perhaps to women of their own race, remember their pretty black-eyed and rosy-cheeked Burmese babies, who were so bright and merry and who, unlike English babies, never fretted or cried.

The next day we were out all day doing all sorts of things. We visited the Horticultural Gardens, which, in addition to their tropical beauty, had, like most things in Burmah, a very homelike charm. And we went shopping on the Strand, very different from the London Strand as most of the shops are Chinese. Some, however, are Burmese, and in the principal silk shop we bought some more Burmese silks, one a rosy lilac, one pink and white striped, and one pure white.

We visited the Sule Pagoda, where the Sule Nat sits outside on the hill, a large white image with tight curled hair like a judge's wig, and the unmistakable expression—half merry, half malicious, and altogether inscrutable—of an elfin sprite. Last of all we went to the Zoological Gardens, where there are indeed not many animals, but the most lovely garden with ponds and brilliant flowers.

On our last day there was still much to do, though Rangoon is not a treasure house like Mandalay. There is a small, but beautiful Confucian temple, the only one which I have ever seen, and in which I was deeply interested. It consists of a little courtyard with a large shrine full of exquisite carving and red lacquer. Instead of a Buddha seated in a niche with other images ranged on each side as in the Chinese Buddhist temples, the whole back of the shrine was filled with a long narrow Chinese table of carved black teak, the top of which was a slab of

rose coloured marble. On this are ranged the holy images interspersed with incense burners, and vases of flowers.

As we entered, there was but one worshipper present, a Chinaman, who was tossing sticks of sandal wood which fell back each time in a different combination on the altar. He was divining, for every worshipper is thus permitted to perform his own rites. Our attendant policeman said he was seeking to know whether it would be a fortunate day for business.

Just then there came another worshipper, a Chinese lady, young and pretty, followed by an old woman, evidently her nurse. The little lady was dressed in a lovely Chinese costume of deep pink silk, a loose jacket and short skirt edged with a rich coloured embroidery on black. Her feet were "golden lilies," in white embroidered shoes with thick cork soles. And the whole back of her head was covered with an ornament in gold and jewels. The nurse was all in black, but she also had lily feet.

On our last afternoon we took the most beautiful drive out to the Victoria Lakes. The way led through roads and lanes bordered with luxuriant trees and brilliant green. Lakes and ponds, monasteries and houses, all of wood, appeared occasionally. But so homelike and familiar was it all, that had it not been for bamboos I could have thought myself in West Virginia.

On our return we paid a parting visit to Mr. B., the Chief of the Police. He had been ill and received us upstairs in a charming room all flowered chintz, and full of old silver and Chinese porcelain. We

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

thanked him for all his kindness, and I said to him :  
“ When I think of Burmah, I shall always think of  
you.” And so I shall. But I was never to see him  
again. A month later he was dead.

## THE GREAT TEMPLES OF SOUTHERN INDIA

**C**EYLON is the key of the Indian Empire. Each time we opened a different door of Hindustan, we turned Ceylon.

A four days' voyage on a steamer of the Bibby Line brought us from Rangoon to Colombo. The boat was very clean and comfortable, and the table the best that I have ever found on any English line. The company was small, but there was a circus troupe on board who were going round the world; they sat at a long table by themselves and were the object of the interest and attention of the other passengers.

There is always a touch of pathos about these *fabrende volk*. We had a merry, red-headed cabin boy of twelve on board, and on the first day out he and the *prima equestrienne*, also ruddy haired, discovered that they were brother and sister. They had not seen each other for four years and only found each other because the boy noticed her name on the passenger list. Everyone was interested and touched.

The troupe had with them two baby elephants, who at once became my pets. Several times a day I visited them and took them apples and buns. After

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

the first day as soon as my foot was on deck they knew it and began to call to me. Elephants, indeed, are very affectionate and appreciative, and at Colombo I parted from them with a real regret.

We spent twenty-seven hours in Colombo, at the "Oriental," principally resting in a very nice suite of rooms, which looked out on the harbour with its endless variety and charm. Then, at five o'clock, we embarked on a British India boat, and after a rough voyage, it seems always rough around the point of India, we arrived the next morning at eight o'clock at Tutti Corin.

Keen to enjoy our opportunity we immediately took an open carriage and drove around the town, which truly looks more Indian than any we had seen. The people are darker and many of them have curly hair and show their Tamil origin.

The women wear the most graceful of all the Indian costumes, being draped in one piece of silk or cotton which leaves their back almost entirely bare, and reaches only to the knee, always crimson, purple or dark blue, with a border of yellow or gold. Like the women of Ceylon they wear no veils or anything else on their heads, but all of them glitter with jewellery.

We saw three small Hindu temples and a sacred tank, beside which were standing two heavily carved cars which are used for the religious processions, to carry the images of the gods—cars such as the Car of Juggernaut.

Two epidemics were rampant in Tutti Corin at the time, one of cholera, the other smallpox, but as usual in India, we saw no sign of either.

At ten o'clock we started on the train, where we

## GREAT TEMPLES OF SOUTHERN INDIA

sat or reclined at our ease in two little adjoining compartments with tables and washstands.

It was very hot and I was disappointed in the country, which was very arid and looked like Rajputana.

About three o'clock we reached a wonderful rock springing out of the plain. Little temples were cut out in its sides, into which one peeped as into swallows' nests. And nestling round it were other temples and sacred tanks.

From there we got into the mountains, and the whole landscape changed. Now, there were many lakes and ponds, the country became green and fertile, there were palms and banyans, and the whole scenery was beautiful.

I enjoyed the trip extremely, and felt, as everyone must, that Southern India is the real India.

We arrived at nine o'clock at Tanjore. There are no hotels in this part of India, but travellers are provided for at the railway stations, and we got a very nice room with the usual bath, which opened on a large terrace and commanded a beautiful view.

The next morning at sunrise I was out on our terrace taking my first look at Dravidian architecture—its great masterpiece, the Temple of Tanjore. The morning was most beautiful. A lovely green country lay all around, and, above its high surrounding walls, rose the top of the temple, a wedge-shaped mass of stone, richly, overpoweringly carved and softly grey against the turquoise sky.

By eight o'clock we were on our way, and a few minutes later we entered the sacred enclosure. The entrance is, as in all these Dravidian temples through

a gopuram, a high wedge-shaped tower, then through an alley between high walls and a second gopuram. All of this is a mass of carving, barbaric in its richness and yet delicate, with almost the delicacy of Gothic art. Emerging from the second gopuram we found ourselves in the courtyard of the temple, which is dedicated to Shiva.

The first object which arrested our attention was the great Nandi bull, the sacred bull of Shiva, Maha Deva—a great monolith lying on an oblong pedestal, under a canopy of stone, painted white. But only for a moment could this hold us, for behind it rose the temple, a majestic pyramid, a mass of carving, soaring supremely against the pale blue sky.

At the right is a long low building, the coach-house of the god, and then the little temple which Fergusson considers "the gem of Hindu art."

An arcade, full of Linga and crudely frescoed in its interior, surrounds the courtyard. Against it are planted shrubs and flowers, while majestic shade trees stretch their branches over the high walls. The temple is in a very rich and beautiful setting.

The carving of the Dravidian school consists of figures, more or less grotesque, interspersed with small columns and horizontal cylinders in infinite variety. Barbaric, it is, of course, but barbaric with the overflowing richness, the tremendous vitality, of an art irresistible in the force of its prime.

"The gem," is the gem of its kind. But I cannot go farther and agree with Fergusson that it compares with the Sainte-Chapelle. No Hindu architecture can ever truly equal the Gothic; the insuperable difference lies in the inspiration which called the latter forth.

## GREAT TEMPLES OF SOUTHERN INDIA

The little temple is called the Subrahmanya Kovil (Shrine of Kartikkeya), the son of Shiva and God of War. It consists of a tower fifty-five feet high, raised on a base forty-five feet square. Its carving is so delicate that it seems as though it were of wood rather than of stone.

The exact date of the temple of Tanjore is uncertain, though it is known to be one of the oldest in Southern India.

The Dravidian style of architecture arose in the eleventh century, under the Chola kings of Tanjore, and it was in that century that most of the great temples of Shiva were built. And it continued on through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, during which the great temples of Vishnu were erected.

In the sixteenth century, when Southern India became subject to the kings of Vijayanagar, the gopurams and high outer walls were added. These, therefore, though following as much as possible the Dravidian style, do not belong to the original Dravidian architecture: they were merely added to safeguard the temples, by changing each one into a fortress. In earlier times, this of course had been unnecessary, as no matter what wars raged among different Hindu princes, the temples were sacred to all. But after the first Mohammedan invasion of Southern India in 1310 A.D., the Hindus learned that there were other gods, against whom they must defend their own.

The inscriptions which decorate the base of the temples, and the other buildings, are all in Tamil, the old Tamil of the eleventh century.

The Subrahmanya Kovil is much later than the great temple, and is believed to date only from the beginning of the sixteenth century.



The only part of the temple which unbelievers are allowed to enter is the "Coach House of the Gods." This is a long narrow hall, against both sides of which are ranged wooden figures of men and horses, carriages for the gods, canopies and ceremonial fans, all gaudily painted and gilded. These are used in the religious processions, when they are no doubt effective, but seen thus in their store house, and in cold blood, they produce only the tinselled impression of the properties of a theatre as regarded behind the scenes.

We went thence to the palace of the princes of Tanjore. This is modern and uninteresting. There is a large durbar hall, which is crowded with the trash of Europe, but it possesses a treasure: the great library, which was collected by former rajahs and which is unique in India.

It contains eighteen thousand Sanskrit manuscripts, many of which are translations from the Persian. Eight thousand of them are written on palm leaves, and each one is wrapped up in a piece of yellow or red silk. These are arranged on shelves, and the custodian took down and allowed me to examine as many as I liked. There are many copies of the Vedas, Brahmin and Indian epics. I found a superb translation of the "Shah Namah," and many other Persian books with which I am familiar. There were also some French and English books, in each of which the Rajah Shivaji who acquired them had written his name.

The whole library is intensely interesting. To me, it was a mine of jewels, in which I could have, had time been granted me, forgotten the outside world.

We then drove through the town, which is thoroughly Indian, and most interesting, and visited

the house of a silk merchant, which was built around a courtyard and very picturesque, where they showed us silks interwoven with gold.

There were other things to see, notably the first Protestant church in India, built by the German Lutheran missionaries, who, in 1778, came to Tanjore. But our time was ended.

We left Tanjore at three o'clock and at five arrived at Trichonopoly.

We drove at once through the town, which is absolutely Indian, and very interesting, especially the people, who seem entirely untainted by Western civilization.

We reached the great rock, which springs out of the green plain, not the one which we had seen on our journey to Tanjore, but a similar one, though on a larger scale.

There we entered a great gateway, cut in the rock itself, and climbed up a staircase of 270 steps, painted in stripes of red and white, which leads to the platform at the top. The whole rock is honeycombed, and, as we climbed, we came on little temples and pillared halls and galleries. It was the most suggestively mysterious place that I have ever seen. And, as we peeped into the shrines and looked down the long dim galleries, old memories thronged my mind of tales once heard, dreams half forgotten; the dim traditions, which still linger with us, of the mysteries of the ancient world. At last we came out on the platform at the top, from which we saw the whole country at our feet.

The town was on one side, on the other a forest of palms, in the midst of which rose—strange sight

in this pure Hindu country—a white Saracenic dome.

Just below us was a sacred tank, with an exquisite rest-house, in its centre, and surrounded by flights of steps and a graceful balustrade. There is nothing more beautiful or poetic than these sacred tanks, full of dark green water. A little farther away a white cathedral church lifted its golden cross above the green, and in the distance were the towers of the great temples of Sri Rangam.

We saw the sun set there, and then made our way down again, through the rock-cut labyrinth, by the glimmer of candles, in the dusk.

Again we had rooms at the railway station, where, after a fairly good dinner, we went to bed.

The next morning, after we had breakfasted on our veranda, looking out with delight over the Indian scene, we started on our pilgrimage to the great temple of Sri Rangam. To reach it we took the most beautiful drive along richly shaded roads, past groves of palms and pale green ponds, and Indian "Rest Houses of the Gods," in carved and fluted stone. All the graceful brilliant life of India winding with us like a bright coloured riband along the way.

The great temple of Vishnu, one of the most famous and, I believe, the largest in India, is really a walled city on an island, capable in former times of the utmost defence.

We were made to alight at the outer gate, as one may only enter on foot. Indeed the permission to enter at all is only a concession wrung from the Brahmins by the British Government.

Fergusson believes this temple to be not more than two hundred years old, and considers that its

## GREAT TEMPLES OF SOUTHERN INDIA

general design is marred by the fact that "the buildings diminish in size and importance from the exterior to the innermost enclosure."

My difficulty with it was to grasp or take it in. It was like trying to see and realize a city all at once.

We walked under several stupendous gopurams, the decoration of which was painted as well as carved, and through several vast courtyards. Then we were conducted up on the roof of the building, from which we looked down on the shrine of Vishnu, which no Pariah or unbeliever is allowed to approach.

This shrine, which seems small and low in comparison to its surroundings, seems to be entirely covered with gold and silver. It flashed and glittered so brilliantly in the sun that it was difficult to observe it steadily, much less make out its form.

Then we wandered through long dim pillared galleries, where the sun shot shafts of light through square openings far overhead, till we reached the "Hall of a Thousand Columns."

The whole temple is built of a light grey stone and the "Hall of a Thousand Columns" seems like a petrified forest, with strange gods and demons—statues on horseback and on foot—lying in wait among the carved trunks of the trees. It made me feel as if the clock of Time had been turned back three thousand years or more, as if I were in one of the great Egyptian temples when the religion of the Pharaohs was in flower.

On each side of the temple are streets of houses, occupied by the Brahmins and all the various servants of the temple. The most interesting of these is the street of the sacred dancing girls.

Our one misfortune in India had been that we had

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

seen no religious festivals. Not having been able therefore to see the sacred dancing girls in any religious processions, I was determined to see one at home.

Our guide had arranged for our visit. And after we had seen all that was permitted of the temple we repaired to her house, which was one of a number, all small and exactly alike, which lined a broad, bright street. We entered a small room in which a flight of stone steps ascended over a half arch to the upper floor. A stove stood under another arch on the opposite side, and a few wooden chairs, a piece of matting and some framed prints on the walls completed the furniture of the room.

Two of the chairs were placed for us, and two women, in the costume of Rajputana, and carrying instruments like guitars came in and sat down on the matting. They began to play an Indian air, low and sweet, and then there entered from the room behind, the sacred *coryphée*—a beautiful young Hindu woman with a skin like pale gold, and graceful as a fawn.

The Indian dancing girls, sacred and profane, are the most modestly dressed women in India. Indeed, there is a subtle coquetry very well conceived which leads them to hide those charms which the married women reveal so lavishly. These *danseuses sacrées* are all courtesans and, like the majority of the priestesses of antiquity, this is part of their vocation; but they must not be confused with the secular dancing girls or bayaderes, who are mere ordinary prostitutes. The former, on the contrary, enjoy a high degree of consideration and are attached entirely to the service of the temples. Every day they dance before the

## GREAT TEMPLES OF SOUTHERN INDIA

“gods,” and have their part in all religious festivals and processions.

Our *danseuse* wore the usual rich and graceful costume. A full cotton skirt, lilac flowers on a white ground, and a splendid piece of drapery of crimson and gold brocade, which gracefully swathed her from her left shoulder to her knees, where it fell over her skirt in rich crimson fringe. Only her right arm and shoulder were left free, showing a short sleeve of green satin embroidered in gold and jewels. She wore bangles and anklets of gold and silver, and pomegranate flowers were in her hair.

She came first and shook hands with us and then taking her place on the matting began her “sacred dance.” “A sacred dance and a sacred dancer” in this brutal electro-plated twentieth century. It seemed almost too wonderful, too good to be true! Ah, but this was true.

I know the dances of the Orient, and have studied their meaning as I have sought to study everything which belongs to the life of the East. But this dance was different from any that I have ever seen. This was an illustrative poem.

Like the evening breeze on the water she glided over the matting, swaying slightly and revolving in a rhythmic circle, while she held her hands extended with the palms toward the ground, the primeval gesture of weaving a spell.

It was a dance which the Occident and the near Orient itself have forgotten; a dance which ended, for the Western world, in Egypt and in Greece; which was never transplanted to Rome, because Rome was already too modern and effete; a dance which

lives on here because the old religion lives on, and which, like it, belongs to the morning of the world!

At Madura we had our first experience of living in a Dak Bungalow, and my conclusion is that when once understood I prefer them to most Indian hotels. As a rule these establishments, which are maintained by the Government, consist of one to several one-story buildings, composed of the usual bedrooms with verandas in front and bathrooms behind. In one is always the dining-room, which is presided over by the "butler," with one or two attendants, who buys, cooks and serves whatever one orders, or at least what the market supplies.

We had parted with our Rama at Calcutta and not greatly felt his loss, but the next time I go to India I shall provide myself with a servant who knows how to cater and cook and then I shall stay at dak bungalows throughout, and be quite independent.

The Madura Dak Bungalow was particularly restful and attractive, and we spent two days there very comfortably. Our veranda looked on the "compound," a green enclosure shaded by large trees. But it was the view from our back door which pleased me best. This looked out towards the sunset over an old stone well and a grove of palms. There were always two or three Hindus in bright coloured raiment around the well, and I shall never forget it as I saw it first and twice again in the rosy glow of the setting sun.

It reminded me of something. I fancied it was a picture in a book of Bible stories which I had had as a child, but perhaps it was more than that: perhaps, like so many things in India, I had seen it before.

## GREAT TEMPLES OF SOUTHERN INDIA

The next morning we were up early, and had a beautiful drive to the temple of Shivah, and Mintchi—his third wife—a goddess of whom I have only heard in Southern India.

Built of a grey soft stone, this temple is enormous and most imposing. We passed under several gopurams and crossed several courtyards. Then we followed the Brahmin, who was our guide, through long pillared halls, which seemed endless; where the light came through unseen shafts above, adding to the weird mystery of the place. The third gallery we entered through a great door of chiselled brass, around the frame of which little red and white lamps are always burning.

We saw the great bull idol, the Nandi bull of Shiva; and in the farthest hall the golden flagstaffs and the beautiful golden altar, shaped like a rose, in the heart of which incense is burned to Shiva.

The temple elephant came out to see us, pacing solemnly through the hall with two great bells slung over his back on a crimson cord, which rang out their deep notes at every step. We gave him money, and then a Brahmin came and hung a garland of yellow marigolds around my neck.

Here, also, there is a "Hall of a Thousand Pillars," in which we wandered among the lights and shades. And we were permitted to look down long dark galleries, along whose walls lamps glimmered like fire-flies in the dusk—galleries which no profane foot might enter, as they lead to the most sacred shrines.

The whole temple is a marvellous sight, and more than that, a most wonderful experience. The past still living in the present.



There was staying at the bungalow with us a charming Englishman, a District Judge. He took his meals with us and spent the evening with us on the veranda. He was the second Englishman we met in India who had become a Catholic there in consequence of his observation of the difference between the Catholic and Protestant missionaries.

We had lunch with him on our return from the temple, and afterwards we went to see the palace of the Maharajah of Madura, now occupied as the offices of the British Government.

This palace, which dates from the seventeenth century, though it lacks the beauty and richness of the palaces of Northern India, is very imposing. We entered a great courtyard, surrounded by an arcade of massive pillars supporting scalloped arches, at the back of which is the great audience hall, carried out in the same style. The whole is built of granite, encased in beautiful yellow chunam. And in the centre of the courtyard is a *parterre* of brilliant flowers.

Never have I seen a place which was more familiar to me: as soon as we entered the gateway it all came back to me. And I said to my husband without a moment's hesitation: "I have been here before, I think I have lived here." No wonder the scene from our back windows was familiar.

We then drove out to see the great banyan tree, the most beautiful one in India. (The largest one we had seen in the garden at Calcutta.) It stands in a neglected garden and holds the palm among its kind, because it is perfectly symmetrical and round.

Farther on we reached the great sacred tank or Teppa Kulam: a sheet of glittering deep green

## GREAT TEMPLES OF SOUTHERN INDIA

water enclosed by a granite parapet, a thousand feet square. At each corner of the tank is a mandipam or pavilion, and on a square island in the centre an exquisite conical temple nestles among a bouquet of bananas and palms. All around is a wealth of tropical forest, and to me the Teppa Kulam is the most beautiful thing in Southern India!

That evening, as we sat on the veranda with Judge R., he told us some of the facts which had come under his notice about the malpractices of certain missionaries. We had indeed heard the same things at different places in India and Burmah. And I regret to say that many of those about whom these things are told are Americans. I will repeat one story here in the belief that the truth is always best, and that there is no reason why a missionary should be screened, just because he is a missionary, when he betrays his sacred trust.

There were two American women, Methodist missionaries who had a school for Indian girls at this Station. They also employed a gardener, who in spite of their efforts remained of the Hindu religion. Like all Hindus, the gardener was married, and he had three children. Nevertheless he fell in love with one of the girls in the school. The missionaries, now seeing their opportunity, told him that if he became a convert they would ignore his Hindu marriage and give him the girl as his wife. The bargain was struck, but the wife and her parents, not being parties to it, came to Judge R. and complained. He summoned the missionaries, told them that there was no divorce in India and that all such practices as theirs were against the law. They maintained their purpose, but he obliged them to

deposit half the gardener's wages with him, which he then gave to the man's wife. Some time later the Inspector who makes the round of the provincial Governments arrived. The missionaries went to him and complained that Judge R. was interfering with their work of "converting the heathen," and asked to have their complaint laid before the Viceroy. The Inspector mentioned the matter to Judge R., and said he refused their request. The Judge begged him to assent, so that when the matter was laid before the Viceroy, he on his side might produce all the evidence he had against them, for this was only one of their offences, and they would then be ordered out of the province. The Inspector communicated this to them and undertook to present their complaint, which they then withdrew entirely!

The next day was Sunday, and I got up very early and went to Mass at the Portuguese Mission Church. There are two Catholic missions in Madura. The other one, which is French, I had visited the day before and had an interesting talk with the priest.

What a wonderful proof of our faith it is, that from these two countries, the only ones in the entire world which have officially *no religion*, noble and valiant men are still carrying the Cross to the ends of the earth.

The church was most interesting, because it was so absolutely an Indian mission. I was the only "foreigner" there. It was just one long room with painted walls, stations of the Cross, and three white altars glittering with candles and bright with flowers. The whole front part was spread with matting, on which sat Hindu women in the rich colours of the south, with their babies in their arms.

## GREAT TEMPLES OF SOUTHERN INDIA

Behind were Eurasians—descendants doubtless of the first converts of the Portuguese—in European dress. And outside, for the doorway was wide open, one saw palms against a pale blue sky, while opposite was a sacred tank, in its centre a picturesque “rest-house” of the gods. It was an experience which is stamped on my memory for ever, and all the more, as it was my last in India.

That afternoon we took the train for Tutti Corin, where we found the sea very stormy and wild. With great discomfort and some little danger we gained the British India boat in a steam launch, and the next morning, after a very disagreeable trip, we were once more at Colombo.

From the moment when I had first set foot on the red soil of Ceylon, thoughts of reincarnation and memories, as it were, of other lives had filled my heart and mind. Through all the interest and wonder and delight of what I saw, and found, in these lands of the sun, these thoughts were always there, woven like the threads of gold through the glowing colours of an Indian brocade. Some will laugh at this, but not all. There are others who have been stirred by these same memories and felt the call of the past, like myself.

India is an old country, and, if the doctrine of reincarnation be true, those who can remember may well have had one, if not many, incarnations there. America is a new country. Time has not been given for many to live there before.

The Englishman is, of all civilized men, the least susceptible to outside influence, the least adaptable. I have known Englishmen who had lived in America for years, but never one who became an American.

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

But it happens in the Indies, that Englishmen sometimes in a very few years "go native." This means they become Indians of some sort; they marry Hindu women, lead the Hindu life, and refuse ever to return to England, or what we call "civilization." There are instances of the same thing in the South Sea Islands, among the emerald mountains of Fiji, and on far away forgotten coral reefs. Why is this?

Is it not because, returning once again to these old lands where they have lived before, these lands of light and beauty, that memory which neither time nor death can kill awakes—the present fades away and the indestructible triumphant past reclaims them for her own?

## THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SPOT IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE

**T**HIS being my third visit to Colombo, I began to feel as if I had been born and brought up there.

We arrived at the Oriental Hotel at eight o'clock, and after breakfast I went out, did some shopping, and had my hair shampooed. This shampoo was so remarkable that I must describe it. I was conducted into a back room at the hairdresser's, which had a very "behind the scenes" appearance. Two white-robed Cingalese seized me, wrapped me in a white *peignoir*, took down my hair, and seating me in front of a large basin began to shampoo my hair, both of them rubbing it at once, and so hard that I thought they would rub my head off. There was no arguing with them, I could only trust in Heaven.

Finally they got through, and I went out in their little back yard and dried it in the sun. When I mentioned this to some English friends afterwards, they were horrified at my imprudence. But English people do not understand the sun; I never found it any different from our own.

At two o'clock that afternoon we started for Kandy. The journey was a dream of beauty, revealing to us the full glory of the Tropics, such as we had

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

not seen before; through forests of palms and thickets of bananas; past pools and ponds and rivers, everything in the most effulgent luxuriance and vibrating with emerald green; no architecture anywhere, only huts of wattle and thatch, the tropics pure and unalloyed.

The way rose rapidly and when we were once in the mountains it was more than beautiful. Ceylon is the land of cascades, which come leaping down the sides of the mountains, glittering in the sun. In many places the forest has been cleared away and the whole sides of the mountains are terraced, each terrace being a rice field. Into these the cascades are persuaded, and the whole terrace is then dripping with water, like a fringe of diamonds.

The railroad runs around sharp curves, down which one looks into deep valleys, while on the other hand the mountains rise majestically against the turquoise sky. And whether one looks up or down, the landscape with its forests, rice fields and cascades, is glorious beyond the power of words to paint, in its green splendour.

We reached Kandy at six o'clock and went to the Queen Hotel, a comfortable house kept by Germans and furnished with "real furniture," where we got very nice rooms on the top floor looking out on the lake.

When we went down for dinner in the long white dining-room we found it just like the *salle-à-manger* of any other fashionable resort. And indeed, this happy village, with its sacred lake, not long ago the capital of the Kandyan kings, is fast becoming a fashionable resort.

The next day it rained nearly all the morning,

and I stayed in the house and wrote letters, glad of the rest. But my husband went out and brought me back a bunch of roses, roses of a sweet blush pink, which he had bought and picked for me in a garden himself. And in this land of overflowing vegetation, roses are so rare that these filled us both with delight.

In the afternoon it cleared, and we took a lovely drive to Peredenia, the most beautiful tropical garden in the world. It is indeed. And on this, our first visit, we spent a happy hour walking over it with a good old Cingalese gardener as our guide.

There are all sorts and varieties of palms and orchids, and the largest bamboos in the world. All the spices grow here and our old gardener gave us a nutmeg—of which we ate the crimson network of mace—green cloves, allspice leaves and a vanilla bean. It was a feast of ambrosia. Great rubber trees there are, large as Cedars of Lebanon, whose roots overflow the ground around them like petrified rivulets. Among other exotics, we saw a candle tree, which looks for all the world like a Christmas tree decked with white candles, and a large purple flower called "Venus's fly-trap," which eats flies and does not disdain a bit of beefsteak. There are great beds of red and yellow flowers, brilliant as fire and gold. And it is all so green in the setting of the mountains, so beautiful and wonderful, that it seemed to me the ideal of Paradise.

Another dinner with everyone *en grande toilette*, finished the day. The food was good, but without any seasoning, to please the English. It is really sad to think that they are spreading their tasteless cooking over so much of the globe.



## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

Kandy is considered the most beautiful spot in the British Empire. Nature indeed has done everything to make it so, and art has flowered here, nowhere else in Ceylon, to put the finishing touch to the work.

The town, or rather village, lies in a circular valley surrounded by mountains, mantled entirely with tropical forests. In the centre is an artificial lake made by the old kings of Kandy, by damming a stream, which escapes in a cataract at the western end. The lake is two miles and a half in circumference and surrounded by a fine machiolated balustrade of grey stone. Rich flowering trees hang over it and it lies like a mirror on green velvet, reflecting in its crystal heart the emerald of the mountain and the turquoise of the sky.

On the northern shore of the lake lies the once royal village, whose palace, temple and library are still preserved. There are a few wide streets shaded by splendid trees and bordered by old verandahed houses in beautiful gardens; a few shops clustered around the railway station; and a white Catholic church of the eighteenth century. Over the town and the valley broods an air of peace, happiness and dreamy repose.

The importance of Kandy and its selection as the capital are due to its possession of the tooth of Buddha and other relics, which were brought thither in the fourteenth century.

The sacred tooth was first brought from India to Ceylon by a Princess Kalinga, who concealed it in her hair, about 400 A.D., for, at the time of the visit of Fa Hian, the great Chinese pilgrim in 411, it was already there. It was recaptured by the Malabars

## THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SPOT

in 1315, and taken back to India, but was recovered by Bakrama Bahu III, King of Kandy. On the arrival of the Portuguese it was hidden but was discovered by them and taken by Don Constantine de Braganza to Goa, where, in the constant Portuguese efforts to destroy idolatry, it was burned by the Archbishop in the presence of the Viceroy and his Court, in 1560.

Nothing daunted, Vikrama, the then King of Kandy, had a new one made. The present sacred tooth is carved out of a piece of discoloured ivory, two inches long and one inch in diameter, and resembles the tooth of a horse rather than that of a man. The shrine which was built for it, and which I shall describe a little later, is hidden from the outside world in the courtyard of the temple-palace.

The temple itself, which was built in 1600 by Portuguese prisoners, is most interesting and picturesque. Standing at the foot of a mountain, it has in front of it a moat full of sacred turtles, which is spanned by a single bridge guarded by two stone elephants. It is built of white stone, with a terrace, heavily pillared veranda and high peaked roof, and its most striking feature is the Octagon Tower, built on the corner towards the lake.

Opposite the temple in a green enclosure are two little shrines and two pagodas, all white and very simple in design. And across the road from these is a curious building, built out in the lake and approached by a stone bridge. This was the royal library. And a library it is still, and said to contain a valuable collection of Buddhist books. It is square and white with a high peaked roof and a colonnade of massive stone pillars on three sides. This

architecture though plain is impressive, and fits into the tropical landscape like pearls in a setting of emeralds.

We had determined to spend two weeks in Kandy for rest and pleasure, as our journey was over and it was our last station in the Indies; so we took things easily.

Every morning I walked round the lake and revelled in its beauty. And on these walks I had a good opportunity of studying the Cingalese who also walked around the sacred lake. These are the real Cingalese, unmixed with Tamil or Malay. They are rather darker than the people in Colombo, but much finer looking. There is an aristocracy in Kandy still, landed proprietors who are known as the "Kandyan Chiefs." Sometimes I met these Kandyan ladies, who are very attractive. They all wore the costume which I have described before, the low-necked bodice of muslin trimmed with lace and the silken drapery wrapped around them below the waist. Sometimes also, they wore another piece of silk thrown gracefully over their heads, and they all had rich gold jewellery of old Kandyan workmanship.

Hindus there are too, of Southern India, in the most picturesque costume, whom I was always glad to meet again; and sometimes a Buddhist monk appeared among the green, a flash of yellow splendour.

At the upper end of the lake there were large tennis courts, enclosed in a high wire netting and shaded by great trees, where the English girls and young men were playing the game all day long. They were all in white, and therefore appeared to much more advantage than in the hideous costumes

## THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SPOT

they wear in England, and I often stopped to watch them.

I have lived in many countries, and though they differ in many ways, there is one thing which is the same in all but one, and that is youth. In England youth is different, and that difference, which the English carry with them as they do all their "differences" struck me most forcibly in Ceylon.

In all other countries youths and maidens love to be together. They love to dance because they are dancing together, to feast, if there be only bonbons, because they are feasting together, but they are independent of amusements because their best amusement is just to be together.

In England on the contrary, the moment youths and maidens meet, they must play some game. They must be hitting or batting or malleting balls. They have in this way no time or thought for each other, and I am quite convinced that sport is the principal cause of the low marriage rate among the upper class in England, and the indifference of the young men for the girls.

At no matter what time we passed the tennis court, they were jumping and batting in perfect silence. I always thought how different it would be if they had been Americans. Then the bats and balls would have had a long rest and the girls and boys would have been sitting in couples in the shade engaged in the old "game for two," which began in the Garden of Eden. Certainly our way is more natural!

I wish I could describe our drives at Kandy, for they are certainly the most beautiful in the world. On our second afternoon we took the road which is known as Lady Horton's Walk, and which winds

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

through the tropical forest, sometimes along the river—the beautiful Mahaweli-Ganga—and sometimes through open glades. We saw many cor<sup>and</sup> trees heavy with purple nuts, and there were m<sup>and</sup> brilliant flowers. We were the whole time <sup>and</sup> ecstasies of admiration and delight; Kandy is the true heart of the Tropics!

Another beautiful drive leads through the thickest tangles of the forest, where the trees are bound together with lianas in one luxuriant green mass, a dream of beauty! Then suddenly it emerges on the edge of a bold precipice, and we looked down on a wonderful panorama of mountains, with the river winding like a silver ribbon far below.

We wound down again from this height by a road which leads half round the lake, and stopped at a garden where, by paying a little tribute of silver, we were allowed to pick for ourselves a large bunch of roses.

Another day we went down to the river to see the sacred elephants take their bath. There were three of them, one immense one with tusks, and two middle-sized ones. And each one had his groom or attendant, between whom and himself there seemed to exist a great mutual affection. They love their bath as much as children do and splash and roll about with the greatest delight.

The two smaller ones came out on the bank and played tricks for our benefit. While we were watching them, a cobra wriggled out of a hole in the rock behind us and slid sinuously away among the hanging vines. It was the first snake we had seen in Ceylon, but within the week we saw two others. It was spring and the cobras were waking up.

## THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SPOT

Taking leave of the elephants, we drove on up the river and turned off into a romantic lane, where we followed a mountain stream through the forest. It was perfectly enchanting.

We were invited to spend the day with two young Englishmen, who had a tea and cocoa plantation. Accordingly we started one morning at eight o'clock, and had the most beautiful drive of two hours through the mountains. The forest grew wilder as we went on, and countless waterfalls dashed down among the rocks. We arrived at ten o'clock, and Mr. C. received us at the plantation gate and took us first over the tea factory, where we saw the whole process of making tea, which is surprisingly simple. The tea leaves, when fresh are stiff and glossy, in size and shape, just like the leaves of our American "winter-green."

They are first steamed to make them soft, and then rolled between rollers, like large millstones. Then they are laid out on sail cloth to ferment. Then cooked in wooden boxes with lamps inside, for all the world like incubators. Last of all they are sifted to separate the leaves of different size, and packed in wooden boxes, lined with lead.

Our host then took us to his bungalow, the most attractive one I have seen, and the only one which looks like a home.

It is built on the side of a hill, with a flight of steps cut out of the earth and faced with bark leading up to it. At the top of these steps is a narrow terrace bright with flowers, and the entrance is flanked by two superb baobab trees, which reminded me of the plane trees at Canozza.

The house is only of one story, with a broad

## INDIAN DREAM LANDS

veranda. Inside there is a central hall with a drawing-room on one side and a bedroom on the other. Both are papered with flowered paper, curtained and cushioned with flowered chintz and furnished with attractive old English furniture. The drawing-room had a bay window around which ran a chintz covered window seat. There were photographs in silver frames, lamps with rose-coloured shades, and all the pretty dainty little things which turn a house into a home.

The mistress of the house was in England with her husband, and our two young friends, who were his partners, were keeping bachelor hall.

The second of these, Mr. H., now welcomed us and we were presently taken into a charming dining-room, the walls and ceiling of which were panelled in teak. There we were served with a delicious lunch on a table bright with silver and flowers, luxuries which we had lacked for long. It all convinced me that one can live as well in the Tropics as anywhere else.

We all had a delightful time together. And, after looking at the cocoa and rubber trees, which formed part of the plantation, we had the same beautiful drive home again in the cool of the afternoon.

One day was very much like another at Kandy, only with variations of beauty. We were so enraptured with its tropical splendour, so soothed and satisfied after all our wanderings, that it was several days before we paid our visit to the Shrine of the Sacred Tooth.

The time for this visit on the part of strangers is fixed for the last hour of the day, at which time we presented ourselves in the courtyard of the palace

## THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SPOT

and awaited with suitable humility the arrival of the rather haughty Buddhist priests, who are the guardians of the inestimable treasure.

The Maligava Temple though small, is very rich and beautiful, with a winged roof and encircling veranda, whose pillars and projecting beams are exquisitely carved and painted. It is two stories in height and consists of one room on each floor, the one below being merely an ante-chamber and the one above the shrine.

When the two priests appeared, rustling in their robes of yellow silk, they beckoned to us and we followed them up the steps of the veranda, where the elder of the two unlocked the richly painted door, and we all entered the temple.

The lower room has cupboards around the walls and doubtless answers the purpose of the sacristy. The priest led us up a narrow wooden staircase in one corner to the sanctuary above. Here daylight is not permitted to enter, but a "dim religious light" is diffused by hanging lamps fed with perfumed oil. The walls are hung with rich brocades, and behind a grating, which only the priests may pass, is the sacred shrine.

There, on a table of massive silver, under a silver canopy, rests the "Holy Tooth"! Covered by a bell or beehive, perhaps two feet high, of gold, studded with diamonds, rubies and cats-eyes. Under this bell, or beehive, are six similar bells, said to increase in richness as they diminish in size. And, under the seventh lies the sacred tooth on a lotus flower of pure gold! This, however, our profane eyes were not to see. It is only shown to "true believers" on high festivals.



The priests performed a ceremony, chanting and reciting prayers. And then, from behind the grating, which is light and open, they presented to us a large round silver platter of rich workmanship, filled with white flowers. As usual the flowers were cut short from their stems, and filled the platter like a pile of snow. We pushed them aside and deposited our offering on the plate, whereupon the priest tilted the platter and the flowers drifted over it again. It was the most graceful and poetical way of making an offering at a shrine which has ever been imagined.

We were then conducted by a temple attendant to see the treasury and votive offerings, which are kept in the Octagon Tower. This whole part of the palace now belongs to the temple.

There are many rare and beautiful things, with many more whose value lies in the devotion which dedicated them to the shrine. The masterpiece of the collection is a Buddha, carved in rock crystal and ornamented with jewels, which is enclosed in a shrine of carved ivory, silver and gold. Six hundred years old, it is the finest example of Buddhist art which I have ever seen.

There are a few shops in Kandy, where one may buy old things. Most of these have little value, but in rummaging in a box of jewellery at one of them we found two silver chains of old Kandyian workmanship, which were both rare and beautiful. One was a chain of Buddhist "Wheels of Life," the other of diamond-shaped pieces of metal held together by double links. On our return to Europe I took them to the great jeweller, Koch, in Frankfurt, who pronounced them admirable. By his advice they

## THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SPOT

were gilded as they had been originally, and I have the satisfaction of having made one real treasure trove.

We spent our last afternoon at Kandy in the Peredenia Gardens, which the more one sees of them, seem always the more beautiful. Nature intended this spot for a garden, for it is caught away from the forest by the Mahaweli-Ganga, which makes a shining loop around it so that it is almost an island, lying like a rare bouquet of flowers on a platter of crystal.

The old kings of Kandy made it their garden long ago, and to honour it the more they threw across the river in one high noble span, a bridge of satin wood. Had they built it of less precious material we might have had it still. But, alas, the satin wood was too great a temptation for the commercial instincts of the British conquerors. The bridge was removed and sold to make chairs and tables, and lower down the river an ungainly iron structure in three arches has taken its place. *Sic transit gloria mundi!*

On our last morning I walked around the lake, perhaps for the last time, perhaps I may walk there again!

"The one remains, the many change and pass,  
Heaven's light forever shines, earth's shadows flee,  
Life like a dome of many coloured glass,  
Stains the white radiance of eternity."

The same beautiful journey back to Colombo, only this time instead of climbing up we were running down. And then we were back at the "Oriental" in our suite overlooking the harbour, when, as it was

the hour of sunset, all Ceylon and all the sky and water were flushed with rose.

We found some English friends there, and spent a gay evening with them in the palm garden. The next day we spent the morning in last visits to our friends the jewellers, and the afternoon in the last beautiful drive to Mount Lavinia.

Our last, last day in the Indies was Sunday. I was up very early and down in the garden of the hotel bidding farewell to the flora of the Tropics. Then I went to High Mass at the Church of St. Philip Neri.

It was the bi-centennial of the apostle of Ceylon, St. Joseph Daas, the Hindu of Goa, who had taken a Dutch name, and had been the first to carry the Cross to Ceylon. It was therefore a great festival and the church was filled with the descendants of those first converts, a most interesting congregation.

Often in Ceylon the words of the old missionary hymn which I had learned as a child from other children, though it is not of our faith, came back to me.

“What though the spicy breezes  
Blow soft o’er Ceylon’s isle,  
Though every prospect pleases,  
And only man is vile.”

Man is not vile in this beautiful island, but gentle and patient and good.

I have travelled far and wide, and I find that man is only vile, and then thank God it is the minority, in those countries where civilization has been forced and overdone till it has fermented and soured; in those countries where men have forgotten God and worship only themselves and the golden calf!

## *THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SPOT*

As we stood on the deck of the steamer, which was to bear us back to Europe, my eyes lingered with love and regret on those glowing shores of red and green. I felt that I was leaving something of my heart behind.